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DRAGON®

A Dungeons & Dragons® Roleplaying Game Supplement

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Contents

FEATURES

5 **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 3 DEBUT: THE BATTLEMIND**
Get your first look at this new psionic class a full month before the release of *Player's Handbook 3*.

18 **BAZAAR OF THE BIZARRE: LEGENDARY FIGURINES**
By Robert J. Schwalb
Figurines of wondrous power for the paragon and epic tiers.

25 **WARLOCK BASICS**
By Matthew Sernett
Get the starter basics for building a bad-ass warlock, as well as some new feats for your 'lock character.

25 **TO WALK UNSEEN PATHS**
By Ari Marmell
Learn about those who walk the Unseen Path, rangers who seek to strike the perfect balance between the world and the Feywild.

33 **CLASS ACTS: BARBARIAN**
By Aeryn "Blackdirge" Rudel
New evocations for two-hander barbarians, emphasizing those that grant reach.

41 **CLASS ACTS: AVENGER**
By Robert J. Schwalb
Discover the Godsworn—avengers who devote themselves fully to the destruction of their deity's enemies.

43 **CLASS ACTS: CLERIC**
By Matt James
New prayers and magic items for battle clerics.

45 **CLASS ACTS: WARLORD**
By Robert J. Schwalb
Discover the commando warlord, fast on his feet and ready to seize whatever opportunities arise in battle.

48 **WINNING RACES: GNOMES**
By Brian Yablon
Gnomes make poor defenders... or do they? Discover how gnomes protect their communities from their many foes.

52 **WINNING RACES: ELADRIN**
By Robert J. Schwalb
The winterkin eladrin have potent bonds to the Cold Lands of the feywild. Learn about this new eladrin bloodline here.

56 **CLASS ACTS: WARLORD**
By Robert. J. Schwalb
These powers offer the warlord unique powers that enhance his allies' abilities.

60 **CHANNEL DIVINITY: MIELIKKI**
By Matthew Sernett
In the Realms, Mielikki is called the Daughter of Silvanus, but learn how her followers pursue her goals in the world.

64 **CHANNEL DIVINITY: AVANDRA**
By Robert J. Schwalb
Avandra shows favor to all adventurers who seize the initiative. Discover new skill powers for Avandra worshipers.

4 **EDITORIAL**

67 **DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT**
By Mike Mearls
Mike goes into detail in this commentary on the battlemind class.

68 **DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT**
By Richard Baker & Rodney Thompson
Rich and Rodney talk about *Martial Power 2*.

72 **CONFESSIONS OF A FULL-TIME WIZARD**
By Shelly Mazzanoble
D&D's "Player-in-Chief" shares more of her wisdom and insight.

77 **D&D PLAY REPORT**
By Chris Tulach
Learn all about the new D&D Encounters program and how you can get involved!

80 **AMPERSAND**
By Bill Slavicsek
Bill discusses more of the changes in store for D&D in 2009.

ON THE COVER
Illustration byTyler Jacobson

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384

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I GOT A PONY. . .

. . . AND ALL IT COST ME WAS MY PRIDE

Figurines of wondrous power have a long history in the Dungeons & Dragons® game. They first showed up in the 1st Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*® core rulebook. Since then, many designers have added to the list of *ebony fly*, *golden lions* (pair), *ivory goats* (trio), *marble elephant*, *obsidian steed*, *onyx dog*, and *serpentine owl*. Later editions added to the list with the likes of the *jade sea snake* and the *opal carp*, both available in 4th Edition games near you. And the *pearl sea horse*.

That's right, the game now has a *figurine of wondrous power* that summons a giant aquatic pony. That you can ride. Did I mention it was also pearl? Not mithral. Not titanium. Pearl.

I can imagine a less heroic mount or ally, but it takes some effort. Maybe the purple Peeps figurine? Or the mahogany chipmunk?

As I've mentioned in this space before, I play in a Wednesday night campaign run by Chris Perkins. The world of Iomandra is composed of a vast sea dotted by islands of various sizes. We spend a lot of our sessions aboard ships. In fact, a recent session saw our captured (read: stolen) ship and another ship assaulted by three submersible turtle ships crewed by githyanki pirates. Cool, right? But my point is that we're on or near the water a lot.

You'd think that a figurine that lets you waterski across the water would be a hot commodity. *Jade sea snake*? Rad. *Opal carp*? Less rad, but I can get behind it.

Enter the *pearl sea horse*. Several months back, our group recovered one of these. It was near the beginning of the paragon tier. Keep in mind the aforementioned proximity of water. Not a one of us manly men (ahem) would take the sea pony. In fact, the item sat in the party holding pen, along with spare *healing potions* and the funds to raise Divin, our party cleric, for two entire levels.

And then, one day, I'd had enough. After being stymied—yet again—by a seemingly impassable 100-foot stretch of water, I was done. "You know what? I'll take the pony," I declared. And I did.

I call him Sharkbait.

Since then, I've used Sharkbait at least a dozen times. I can't complain. Each time, someone at the table asks me if I'm enjoying my party dress at my 10th birthday, or something to that effect. But they shut up when Sharkbait leaves them in his wake.

This month, we're adding several new *figurines of wondrous power* to the game, specifically for the paragon and epic tiers. Why should heroic characters have all the fun? Steve and Bart originally pitched this idea. They're big fans of the *ebony fly* and other flying figurines. You know, the ones that actually increase your character's cool factor. The new figurines are pretty much all of the kick-ass variety—the *coral dragon* and *mercury wasp* just sound cool, don't they? As for me, I've taken to the underdog figurines. As soon as I'm able, I'm saving up for the *tourmaline turtle*.

I think I'll call him Shelldon.

What's your favorite *figurine of wondrous power*? Or even your favorite offbeat magic item? Let us know at dndinsider@wizards.com.

Battlemind

By Mike Mearls

illustrations by Tyler Jacobsen

"My mind is a far deadlier weapon than some ill-crafted bit of iron."

For design insights on the battlemind, check out the companion Design & Development article here.

As wanderers, mercenaries, and adventurers, battleminds are carefree warriors who seek only to test their skill against the mightiest and most dangerous opponents. Battleminds possess a potent combination of psionic and physical skill, allowing them to use their magic to manipulate and deceive their foes even as their fighting skill lets them carve a swath through enemy ranks. Battleminds tend to be bold and sometimes arrogant, an attitude earned through bringing ruin to enemies over the course of many conflicts.

You might not share your fellow battleminds' arrogance, but you do have access to an array of combat abilities that let you manipulate, baffle, and defeat your enemies. Your mind is as deadly as your weapon, and with the aid of your psionic magic, your body can turn aside attacks as effectively as a suit of plate armor can.

Let those who would stand against your might quiver in terror when you approach, for you are a battlemind, and supremacy in combat is your birthright.

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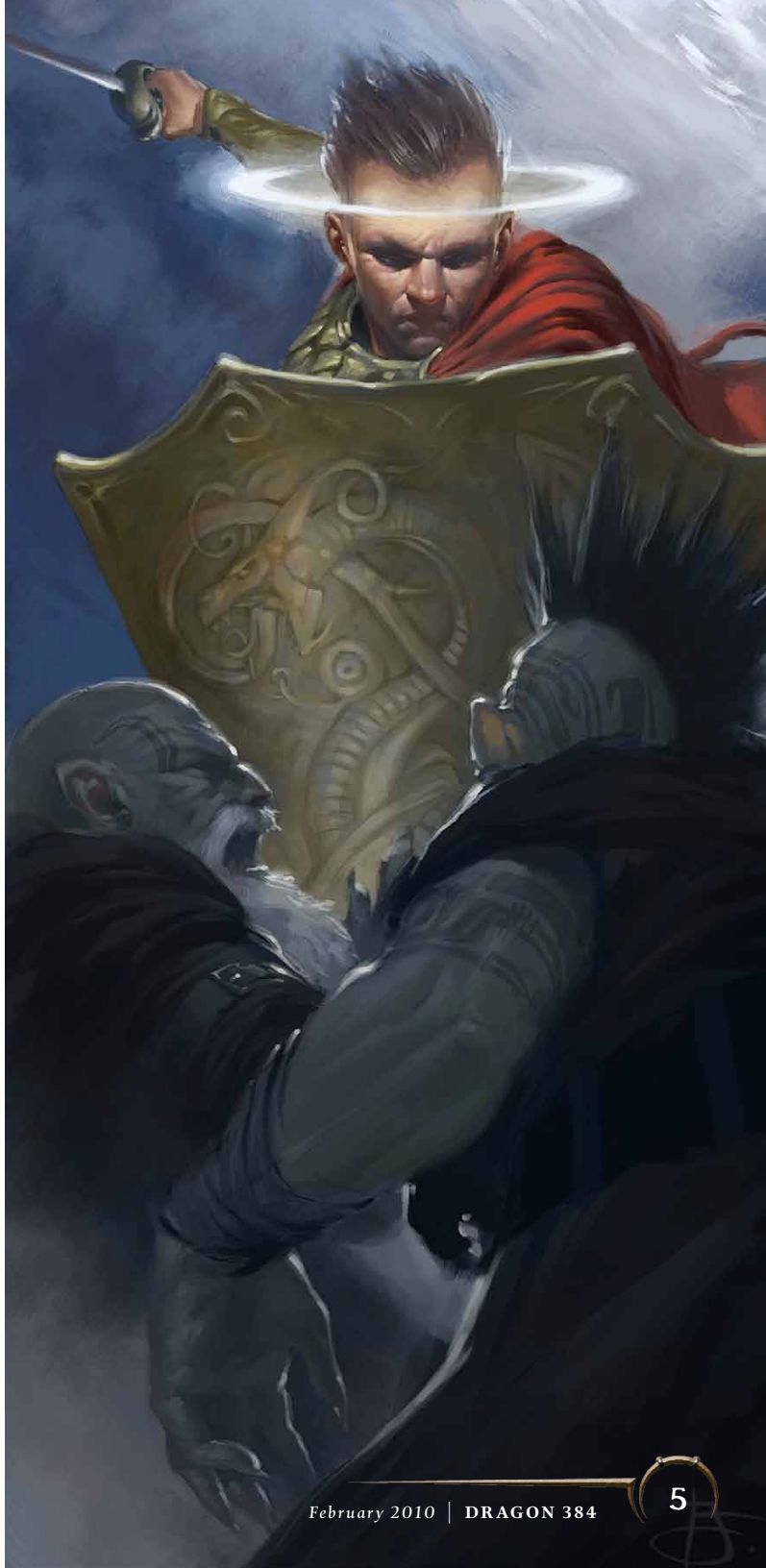


CLASS TRAITS

Role: Defender. You are tough and fast, while your mastery of psionic magic allows you to outwit your foes. Depending on your choice of class features and powers, you lean toward either controller or striker as a secondary role.

Power Source: Psionic. You are a psionic warrior, a weapon master who combines physical might and a cunning intellect.

Key Abilities: Constitution, Wisdom, Charisma

Armor Proficiencies: Cloth, leather, hide, chainmail, scale; light shield, heavy shield

Weapon Proficiencies: Simple melee, military melee, simple ranged

Bonus to Defense: +2 Will

Hit Points at 1st Level: 15 + Constitution score

Hit Points per Level Gained: 6

Healing Surges per Day: 9 + Constitution modifier

Trained Skills: From the class skills list below, choose three trained skills at 1st level.
Class Skills: Arcana (Int), Athletics (Str), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Endurance (Con), Heal (Wis), Insight (Wis), Intimidate (Cha)

Class Features: Psionic Augmentation, Psionic Defense, Psionic Study

Battlemind Class Features

Battleminds have the following class features.

Psionic Augmentation

Through discipline and careful study, you have mastered a form of psionic magic that offers greater versatility than other characters command. You know a broad array of at-will powers, each of which is a conduit through which you can pour as much or as little psionic energy as you choose. You channel psionic energy into a reservoir of personal power—represented in the game as power points—that you can use to augment your at-will attack powers, replacing the encounter attack powers that other characters use.

As a battlemind, you acquire and use powers in a slightly different manner from how most other classes do.

At-Will Attack Powers: At 1st level, you choose two at-will attack powers and one daily attack power from your class, but you don't start with any encounter attack powers from your class. You can instead augment your battlemind at-will attack powers using power points. These powers (and certain others, notably the encounter attack power you gain from a battlemind paragon path) have the augmentable keyword (see the sidebar).

You gain new battlemind at-will attack powers, instead of new encounter attack powers, as you increase in level. At 3rd level, you choose a new battlemind at-will attack power. At 7th, 13th, 17th, 23rd, and 27th level, you can replace one of your augmentable battlemind at-will attack powers with another one of your level or lower. The power you replace must be augmentable.

Power Points: You start with 2 power points. You gain 2 additional power points at 3rd and 7th level, 1 additional power point at 13th level, and 2 additional power points at 17th, 21st, 23rd, and 27th level. If you gain power points from another source (such as your paragon path), add them to your power point total. You can use your power points to augment any augmentable power you have, regardless of how you gained the power.

You regain all your power points when you take a short or an extended rest.

Level	At-Will Attack Powers	Power Points
1	Choose two	Gain 2
3	Choose one	Gain 2 (4 total)
7	Replace one	Gain 2 (6 total)
13	Replace one	Gain 1 (7 total)
17	Replace one	Gain 2 (9 total)
21	—	Gain 2 (11 total)
23	Replace one	Gain 2 (13 total)
27	Replace one	Gain 2 (15 total)

Psionic Defense

Three powers—*battlemind's demand*, *blurred step*, and *mind spike*—help you maintain tactical superiority in combat. You can use these psionic powers to demand your enemies' attention, follow them if they try to avoid you, and punish them if they attack your allies. This combination of mental compulsion and psionic enhancement of your own capabilities makes you a force to be reckoned with in battle.

Psionic Study

Battleminds learn to fight using their bodies as weapons. Some battleminds alter their own form to fit their needs. Other battleminds use their psionic power to predict the best position for launching an attack.

Choose one of these options.

Battle Resilience: You gain the *battle resilience* power, which reflects your ability to use your psionic power to bend your own body to protect yourself.

Speed of Thought: You gain the *speed of thought* power, which allows you to be always ready for a fight.

The Augmentable Keyword

A power that has the augmentable keyword has optional augmentations, which you can use at the cost of power points. You use these rules when you use an augmentable power.

Decide First: You must decide whether and how to augment an augmentable power when you choose to use the power, before you make any attack rolls or apply any of the power's effects.

Power Point Cost: An augmentation specifies its cost in power points. For example, "Augment 1" means you must spend 1 power point to use an augmentation. You must spend the required power points when you decide to use the augmentation.

One at a Time: You can use only one augmentation on a power at a time, so you can't, for example, spend 3 power points to use both a 1-point and a 2-point augmentation on a single power.

Replace Base Effects: When you augment a power, changes to the power are noted in the augmentation. If an augmentation includes a specific power entry, like "Hit" or "Effect," that entry replaces the entry in the base power that has the same name. An augmented version of a power is otherwise identical to the base power.

Unaugmented: When you use an augmentable power without augmenting it, the power is referred to as unaugmented for that use (some effects apply only when a power is unaugmented). A power that doesn't have the augmentable keyword is never considered unaugmented.

At-Will Attack Powers: When a power or some other effect lets you use an at-will attack power, you can choose to use one of your augmentable at-will attack powers, but you must use it unaugmented.

When a racial trait grants you an at-will attack power of your choice and you choose an augmentable at-will attack power, the power loses both the augmentable keyword and its augmentations.

Creating a Battlemind

Battleminds rely on Constitution, Charisma, and Wisdom for their powers. You can choose any powers you like, but many battleminds choose powers that complement their choice of combat style.

Quick Battlemind

You use your psionic power to make yourself faster, increasing your speed and agility in combat. Make Constitution your highest ability score, followed by Charisma to reflect your ability to project your psionic power into the world. Wisdom should be your third-best ability. For daily powers, consider those that grant new opportunity actions to you, ensuring that your foes can't outmaneuver you.

Suggested Class Feature: Speed of Thought
Suggested Feat: Improved Speed of Thought
Suggested Skills: Arcana, Athletics, Insight
Suggested At-Will Powers: *demon dance*, *whirling defense*
Suggested Daily Power: *steel unity strike*

Battlemind Powers

Your powers are called disciplines; they combine your fighting ability with your mastery of psionic magic. You can plant images in a foe's mind and use psionic power to lend unmatched speed and strength to your weapon blows.

Class Features

Each battlemind has the powers *battlemind's demand*, *blurred step*, and *mind spike*.

Battlemind's Demand — Battlemind Feature

You draw your foe's concentration, taunting the foe to strike at you.

At-Will ◆ **Augmentable, Psionic**
Minor Action **Close** burst 3
Target: One creature in burst
Effect: You mark the target until you use this power again or until the end of the encounter.
Augment 1
Target: One or two creatures in burst

Blurred Step — Battlemind Feature

You bend reality with the power of your mind, flashing across the space between you and your enemy.

At-Will ◆ **Psionic**
Opportunity Action **Personal**
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you shifts
Effect: You shift 1 square.

Mind Spike — Battlemind Feature

You force your enemy to feel the pain that it inflicts on your friend.

At-Will ◆ **Force, Psionic, Psychic**
Immediate Reaction **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you deals damage to your ally with an attack that doesn't include you as a target
Target: The triggering enemy
Effect: The target takes force and psychic damage equal to the damage that its attack dealt to your ally.

The Psionic Study option that you choose determines whether you have *battle resilience* (available in *Player's Handbook 3*) or *speed of thought*.

Speed of Thought — Battlemind Feature

You move in the blink of an eye, reaching your foes before they can draw their weapons.

Encounter ◆ **Psionic**
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You roll initiative
Effect: You move a number of squares equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier.
Special: You can use this power even if you're surprised.

Battlemind Overview

Characteristics: Your heavy armor allows you to take on your enemies' attacks without fear, and your melee attacks that are augmented by psionic magic let you control your enemies like puppets and set them up for defeat. You excel at controlling the battle line and forcing enemies to fight you while your allies wreak havoc.

Religion: Battleminds who live up to this class's renowned arrogance rarely pray to the gods, and stories abound of battleminds whose ill luck could be placed at the feet of their impiety. Those battleminds who do follow the gods typically revere Kord for his martial skill and strength, Bahamut for his practice of justice, or Ioun for being the originator of psionic magic.

Races: Dwarves and wilden make excellent resilient battleminds, putting their Constitution and Wisdom to great use in shaping their bodies to meet the needs of combat. Half-elves are ideal quick battleminds, channeling their natural Charisma into psionic alacrity. Goliaths' sheer physical power makes them well suited for this class, and many gnome and tiefling warriors are drawn to the guile and trickery of some battlemind powers.

Level 1 At-Will Disciplines

Demon Dance — Battlemind Attack 1

As you slash your enemy, you implant the image of howling demons into its mind, distracting the foe from making attacks.

At-Will ◆ **Augmentable, Fear, Psionic, Psychic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier psychic damage, and the target takes a –5 penalty to opportunity attack rolls until the end of your next turn.
Augment 1
Hit: As above, and the target loses threatening reach until the end of your next turn.
Augment 2
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier psychic damage, and the target can't make opportunity attacks until the end of your next turn.

Twisted Eye — Battlemind Attack 1

You flood the mind of your foe with psionic energy, befuddling its vision and distorting its perception of nearby threats. By increasing the flood to a torrent, you can blind the foe completely.

At-Will ◆ **Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target takes a penalty to attack rolls equal to the number of your allies adjacent to it.
Augment 1
Special: When making an opportunity attack, you can use this power in place of a melee basic attack.
Augment 2
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the target is blinded until the end of your next turn.

Whirling Defense — Battlemind Attack 1

Seeking to defend your friends, you attack your foe to get it to focus on you. By channeling more power into your attack, you can distract more opponents.

At-Will ◆ **Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you mark the target until the end of your next turn.
Augment 1
Effect: Whenever you use your mind spike before the end of your next turn, the target of that power takes extra damage equal to your Charisma modifier.
Augment 2
Close burst 1
Target: Each enemy you can see in burst

Level 1 Daily Disciplines

Allies to Enemies — Battlemind Attack 1

Your attack rattles your foe with a vision of its allies betraying it. The foe lashes out at a companion before realizing its mistake.

Daily ◆ **Charm, Psionic, Psychic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier psychic damage, and the target makes a melee basic attack as a free action against a creature of your choice.
Miss: Half damage.

Steel Unity Strike — Battlemind Attack 1

You become one with your weapon as you unleash a devastating attack against your foe, leaving yourself in position to strike again if your enemies flee.

Daily ◆ **Psionic, Stance, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You assume the steel unity stance. Until the stance ends, you can make the following secondary attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you moves without shifting on its turn
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy
Secondary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage.

Level 2 Utility Disciplines

Feather Step — Battlemind Utility 2

With a focused thought, you lift your body slightly off the ground on a current of psionic energy, allowing you to move over water or broken ground with ease.

At-Will ◆ **Psionic**
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of this turn, you ignore difficult terrain and can both move across liquid and stand on it as if it were solid ground. In addition, you move 3 squares.

Telepathic Challenge — Battlemind Utility 2

You loom large in your foes' minds, forcing the enemies to turn their attention toward you.

Encounter ☒ **Psionic**
Minor Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Effect: You mark each target until the end of your next turn.

Level 3 At-Will Disciplines

Spectral Legion — Battlemind Attack 3

You trick your enemy into perceiving a legion of foes pressing in upon it. By expending more power, you can make the phantoms seem more real, causing the enemy to freeze in indecision.

At-Will ☒ **Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target grants combat advantage to your allies while they are adjacent to it.
Augment 1
Hit: As above, and the target takes a penalty to the attack rolls of melee attacks and close attacks until the end of your next turn. The penalty equals your Charisma modifier.
Augment 2
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target is immobilized, and it grants combat advantage to your allies while they are adjacent to it.

Visions of Terror — Battlemind Attack 3

With a sweeping attack, you trick your foe's mind into seeing you as a monstrous figure whose blow sends the enemy stumbling back. You can expend more power to cause other foes to stagger back.

At-Will ☒ **Augmentable, Fear, Psionic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you push the target 2 squares.
Augment 1
Hit: As above, but you push the target a number of squares equal to your Charisma modifier. In addition, until the end of your next turn, if you or any of your allies pulls, pushes, or slides the target, the forced movement increases by 1 square.
Augment 2
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you push the target a number of squares equal to your Charisma modifier. After the push, you slide each enemy adjacent to the target 1 square.

Level 5 Daily Disciplines

Beckoning Strike — Battlemind Attack 5

As you strike your enemy, you unleash a surge of psionic energy that warps the minds of the foes you challenge, compelling them to approach you.

Daily ☒ **Psionic, Stance, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You assume the beckoning stance. Until the stance ends, you can make the following secondary attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you moves without shifting on its turn
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy
Secondary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage. At the end of the secondary target's turn, you can use a free action to pull the secondary target a number of squares equal to its speed.

Nightmare Vortex — Battlemind Attack 5

You generate a vortex of nightmares around yourself that engulfs the minds of your enemies, forcing your foes to move away from imagined attacks.

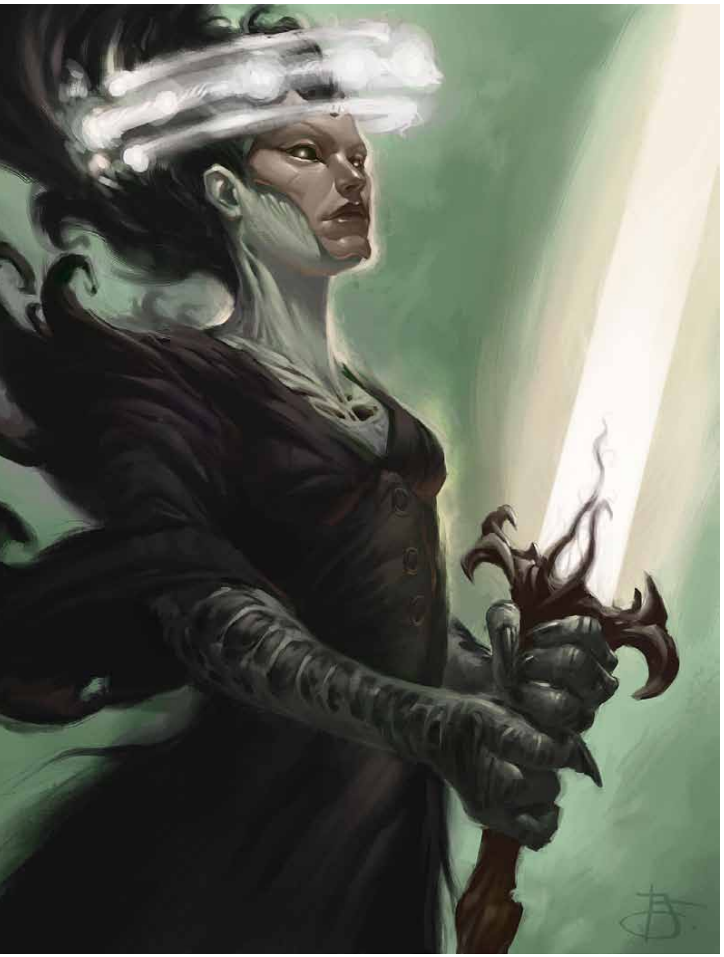
Daily ☒ **Fear, Psionic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each enemy you can see in burst
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you slide the target 1 square.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, whenever an enemy starts its turn within 3 squares of you, you can slide the target 1 square as a free action.

Level 6 Utility Disciplines

Stag's Leap — Battlemind Utility 6

You spring into the air, fueling your leap with your psionic magic.

At-Will ☒ Psionic
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You make an Athletics check to jump with a +5 bonus. You are considered to have a running start.



Winged Weapon — Battlemind Utility 6

You channel psionic energy into your weapon, adjusting the rules of nature so that the weapon will slide through the air as if on wings when you hurl it.

Encounter ☒ Psionic
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Choose a weapon you are holding. The next melee attack you make with that weapon before the end of your next turn becomes a ranged attack with a range of 10. The weapon returns to your hand after you make that attack.

Level 7 At-Will Disciplines

Lightning Rush — Battlemind Attack 7

Like a lightning strike, you rush across the battlefield and launch a counterattack to help a friend. If you choose, you can draw the enemy's attack to yourself.

At-Will ☒ Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon
Immediate Interrupt **Melee** 1
Trigger: An enemy within 5 squares of you targets an ally with an attack
Effect: Before the attack, you move your speed to a square adjacent to the triggering enemy.
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Effect: You don't get your normal standard action on your next turn.
Augment 1
Hit: As above, and the target takes a penalty to the triggering attack roll equal to your Charisma modifier.
Augment 2
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you become the target of the triggering attack.
Effect: You get your normal standard action on your next turn.

Psionic Speed — Battlemind Attack 7

You move in a blur, making a series of quick attacks that force your opponents to regard you as a threat.

At-Will ☒ Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One, two, or three creatures
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] damage, and you mark the target until the end of your next turn.
Augment 1
Effect: After both the first and second attacks, you shift 1 square to a square adjacent to the next target.
Augment 2
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Effect: You mark the target until the end of your next turn.

Level 9 Daily Disciplines

Inexorable Death Strike — Battlemind Attack 9

You project a vision of your enemy's death into the foe's mind.

Daily ☒ Psionic, Psychic, Stance, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Constitution vs. Will
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).
Effect: You assume the inexorable death stance. Until the stance ends, you can make the following secondary attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you moves without shifting on its turn
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy
Secondary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] damage, and the secondary target fails its first saving throw at the end of this turn.
Level 21: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage.

Intellect Hammer — Battlemind Attack 9

You hammer your foe's intellect, draining power from it.

Daily ✦ Psionic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn. In addition, you regain 2 power points.
Miss: Half damage. In addition, you regain 1 power point.

Level 10 Utility Disciplines

Guardian's Speed — Battlemind Utility 10

As your ally reels from an attack, you act with the speed of thought to shield your friend from further assault.

At-Will ✦ Psionic
Immediate Reaction **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent ally takes damage
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: You slide the target 1 square.

Shadow Ally — Battlemind Utility 10

Your form shimmers as you send a wave of psionic energy washing over your foes. In their minds, you fade away as your duplicate appears and threatens them.

Daily ✦ Conjuration, Illusion, Psionic
Minor Action **Ranged** 5
Effect: You conjure an illusory duplicate of yourself in an unoccupied square within range. The duplicate lasts until the end of the encounter. You gain a +4 power bonus to all defenses against any attack that doesn't include both you and the duplicate. As part of a move action, you can move the duplicate 5 squares.

The duplicate can be targeted by melee attacks and ranged attacks, although it lacks hit points. The duplicate disappears if a melee or a ranged attack deals any damage to it.

Level 13 At-Will Disciplines

Brutal Barrage — Battlemind Attack 13

You lash out with your weapon, slamming your foe again and again until you drive it into the ground.

At-Will ✦ Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC. Make the attack three times.
Hit: Constitution modifier damage.
Effect: If you hit the target two or more times, it falls prone.
Augment 1
Attack: Constitution vs. AC. Make the attack four times.
Augment 4
Attack: Constitution vs. AC. Make the attack four times.
Hit: Constitution modifier + Charisma modifier damage.

Luring Steel — Battlemind Attack 13

Your strike delivers a pulse of psionic energy into your enemy, compelling it to attack you or suffer. By increasing the pulse's strength, you can affect more enemies.

At-Will ✦ Augmentable, Psionic, Psychic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage. As a free action, you can use your *battlemind's demand* power against the target.
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, whenever an enemy hits any ally who is adjacent to you with a melee attack, that enemy takes psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier.
Augment 1
Effect: As above, but the enemy takes the damage when it hits or misses.
Augment 4
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you pull each enemy within 2 squares of you 1 square. As a free action, you can use your *battlemind's demand* power against each enemy adjacent to you.

Level 15 Daily Disciplines

Intellect Sunder — Battlemind Attack 15

Your attack devastates your foe's mind, forcing the enemy to revert to its base instincts and focus its anger on you.

Daily ✦ Fear, Psionic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. Will
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage. Whenever the target attacks, it can use only basic attacks and must include you as a target (save ends both).
Miss: Half damage. Until the end of your next turn, whenever the target attacks, it can use only basic attacks and must include you as a target.

Paralyzing Fear Strike — Battlemind Attack 15

You wave your weapon in an intricate pattern, channeling psionic energy into it as you strike. Your foe is paralyzed with fear as it perceives a hellish scene of torment engulfing it.

Daily ✦ Fear, Psionic, Stance, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Constitution vs. Will
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the primary target is immobilized (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the primary target is immobilized until the end of your next turn.
Effect: You assume the paralyzing fear stance. Until the stance ends, you can make the following secondary attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you moves without shifting
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy
Secondary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the secondary target is immobilized until the end of your next turn.
Level 21: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage.

Level 16 Utility Disciplines

Shield of the Iron Mind — Battlemind Utility 16

You create a shield of psionic power that fortifies your allies.

Daily ✦ Psionic, Zone
Minor Action **Close** burst 5
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. When you move, the zone moves with you, remaining centered on you. You and your allies gain a +4 power bonus to Will and saving throws while within the zone.

Sudden Rush — Battlemind Utility 16

With a burst of psionic energy, you appear next to an enemy you have called out.

Encounter ✦ Psionic, Teleportation
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You teleport to a square adjacent to a creature marked by you.

Level 17 At-Will Disciplines

Battle Vortex — Battlemind Attack 17

Your attack creates a vortex that sends waves of psychic energy crashing over your enemies. By increasing the vortex's intensity, you can move or lock down your foes.

At-Will ✦ Augmentable, Psionic, Psychic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, when any enemy starts its turn within 2 squares of you but ends its turn more than 2 squares away from you, that enemy takes psychic damage equal to your Constitution modifier.
Augment 1
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, while the target is within 2 squares of you, it takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls against your allies who are more than 2 squares away from you.
Augment 4 (Teleportation)
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, when any enemy starts its turn within 2 squares of you but ends its turn more than 2 squares away from you, you can teleport that enemy 3 squares as a free action, and it is immobilized until the end of its next turn.

Step of the Pursuer — Battlemind Attack 17

Your attack hammers your foe, allowing you to bind it with a psionic link that keeps your enemy close.

At-Will ✦ Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage. If the target moves away from you on its next turn, you can use a free action to shift 3 squares to a square closer to the target after its move.
Augment 1
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage. You are immune to the slowed and immobilized conditions until the end of your next turn.
Augment 4 (Teleportation)
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage. If the target moves away from you on its next turn, you can use a free action to teleport to a square adjacent to the target after its move.

Level 19 Daily Disciplines

Relentless Strike — Battlemind Attack 19

You assume perfect positioning and strike with precision to leave a lasting wound. While in this stance, you can deliver a staggering blow to any enemy that tries to move away from you.

Daily ✦ Psionic, Stance, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Primary Target: Each enemy in burst
Primary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You assume the perfect storm stance. Until the stance ends, you can make the following secondary attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you moves without shifting
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy
Secondary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the secondary target is dazed until the end of your next turn.
Level 21: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage.

Vengeful Mind — Battlemind Attack 19

You shunt aside your wrath at seeing your friends attacked, focusing your rage to lend exacting precision to your attacks.

Daily ☒ Psionic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, when the target attacks any ally of yours, you gain a +2 power bonus to attack rolls against the target until the end of your next turn. If you already have the bonus when the target attacks an ally, the bonus increases by 1.

Level 22 Utility Disciplines

Tactical Supremacy — Battlemind Utility 22

You're an avatar of battle, taking advantage of the slightest flaws in your enemies' defenses to gain supremacy over them.

Daily ✦ Psionic
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, enemies grant combat advantage to you.

Indomitable Maneuver — Battlemind Utility 22

Assessing your enemies' weaknesses, you maneuver past your foes, positioning yourself to your best advantage.

Encounter ✦ Psionic
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You shift 12 squares and can move through enemies' spaces during the shift.

Level 23 At-Will Disciplines

Armor of Blades — Battlemind Attack 23

As your foe attacks your ally, you intervene to protect your friend.

At-Will ☒ Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon
Immediate Interrupt **Melee** 1
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to you targets one of your allies with a melee attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the target attacks you instead of the ally.
Effect: You don't get your normal standard action on your next turn.
Augment 2
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the target takes a penalty to its attack roll equal to your Charisma modifier.
Augment 6
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you slide the target 3 squares and shift 3 squares to a square adjacent to it. The target then attacks you instead of the ally.
Effect: You get your normal standard action on your next turn.

Spring Assault — Battlemind Attack 23

You leap toward your foe and unleash a fury of blows that overwhelm its defenses.

At-Will ☒ Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC. If you weren't adjacent to the target at the start of this turn, the target grants combat advantage to you for this attack.
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Augment 2
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you shift 3 squares. If you use this power unaugmented on your next turn, you can shift 3 squares as a free action either before or after the attack.
Augment 6
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you are invisible to the target until the end of your next turn.

Level 25 Daily Disciplines

Deadly Haste Strike — Battlemind Attack 25

You weave through the battlefield, darting to a new foe after each strike with such speed that your enemies think they face an army.

Daily ☒ Psionic, Stance, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One, two, three, or four creatures
Primary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Before each attack but the first, you shift your speed. After making all the attacks, you assume the deadly haste stance. Until the stance ends, you can make the following secondary attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you moves without shifting
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy
Secondary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage. You shift half your speed and make a melee basic attack against a different enemy.

Psychic Hammer — Battlemind Attack 25

Your attack leaves your enemy unable to think clearly. With a subtle mental push, you can direct the enemy's actions.

Daily ☒ Charm, Psionic, Psychic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. Will
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier psychic damage, and the target is dominated (save ends). Until this domination ends, you can use a free action at the start of each of the target's turns to slide the target a number of squares equal to its speed.
Miss: Half damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

Level 27 At-Will Disciplines

Brilliant Recovery Battlemind Attack 27

After missing your foe with an attack, you shift your grip on your weapon and make a quick follow-up strike.

At-Will ✕ **Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon**
Minor Action **Melee** weapon
Target: An enemy you missed with an attack during this turn
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Augment 2
Attack: Constitution vs. Reflex
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Augment 6
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Miss: You regain the power points you spent to augment this power.

Cage of Cowardice Battlemind Attack 27

Your attack undermines your foe's confidence in attacking anyone but you. Using more psionic energy, you can stun the foe.

At-Will ✕ **Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you mark the target until the end of your next turn.
Augment 2
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you mark the target until the end of your next turn.
Special: When making an opportunity attack, you can use this power in place of a melee basic attack.
Augment 6
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the target is stunned until the end of your next turn.

Level 29 Daily Disciplines

Mind-Sundering Burst Battlemind Attack 29

You unleash a burst of psychic energy as you spin and slash with your weapon, sending your foes reeling.

Daily ✕ **Psionic, Psychic, Stance, Weapon**
Standard Action **Close** burst 3
Primary Target: Each creature in burst
Primary Attack: Constitution vs. Will
Hit: 4[W] + Constitution modifier psychic damage, and the primary target is dazed and immobilized (save ends both).
Miss: Half damage, and the primary target is dazed until the end of your next turn.
Effect: You assume the mind-sundering stance. Until the stance ends, you can make the following secondary attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you moves without shifting
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy
Secondary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage. You slide the secondary target 3 squares to a square adjacent to you, and it is immobilized (save ends).

Nova Strike Battlemind Attack 29

You erupt into a blur of motion and launch a devastating attack.

Daily ✕ **Psionic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. Reflex
Hit: 7[W] + Constitution modifier damage. If you have no power points remaining, the damage increases by 2[W].
Miss: Half damage.

PARAGON PATHS

Steel Ego

"This contest can end only in your defeat."

Prerequisite: Battlemind, *mind spike* power

Confidence is why you always win. Even when you are faced with a setback, your resolve never wavers, and you're certain you will overcome adversity no matter how severe. Some people mistake your confidence for arrogance or foolishness, but you prove the truth of your words time and again, showing your detractors your might.

You back up your confidence with your psionic mastery, wrapping your soul, body, and mind in a barrier of willpower to deflect any attack you face, whether it strikes your body or mind. With this unwavering resolve, you can dismiss a foe's strikes, standing undaunted before its best efforts to hurt you. And with this security, you project your personality onto those you fight, flooding their minds with the imminence of their defeat.

Steel Ego Path Features

Demanding Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can use your *mind spike* power as a free action until the end of your next turn.

Mind Smash (11th level): Whenever you deal damage with your *mind spike* power, each enemy adjacent to the target takes psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier.

Paragon Power Points (11th level): You gain 2 additional power points.

Psionic Cascade (16th level): Whenever you score a critical hit, you regain 1 power point.

Steel Ego Disciplines

Stinging Rebuke — Steel Ego Attack 11

Your enemy realizes its mistake in attacking when you react to its aggression with a swift strike.

Encounter ◆ **Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon**
Immediate Reaction **Melee** 1
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to you attacks you or your ally with a melee or a close attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you mark the target until the end of your next turn.
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, the range of your *mind spike* power increases to 10, but it remains a melee power. In addition, you can use your *mind spike* power as a free action once before the start of your next turn.
Augment 2
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and you mark the target until the end of your next turn.

Forceful Contempt — Steel Ego Utility 12

Through mental force, you will your flesh to become as hard as steel to foil an attack against you.

Encounter ◆ **Psionic**
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You are hit by an attack that targets a defense other than Fortitude
Effect: The attack instead targets your Fortitude, and you gain a +2 power bonus to Fortitude until the end of your next turn.

Fear and Loathing — Steel Ego Attack 20

As you attack your foe, you bring the full force of your personality against it. The psychic assault rips through your foe's nerves.

Daily ◆ **Fear, Psionic, Psychic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. Fortitude
Hit: 4[W] + Constitution modifier psychic damage, and the target provokes opportunity attacks whenever it makes melee attacks (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target provokes opportunity attacks whenever it makes melee attacks before the end of your next turn.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you can use a free action to slide the target 1 square whenever it is hit by an opportunity attack.

Zephyr Blade

"Can you stop the wind? Can you grasp it in your hands? If not, you stand no chance of stopping me."

Prerequisite: Battlemind

Without formal training, you learned your techniques in a haphazard fashion, unlocking your potential with each contest, awakening new techniques as you blended psionic power with your weapon strikes. At some point during your battles, you began to hear a faint wailing—subtle, quiet, but definitely present. Now when you fight, the breeze whips up into a storm, lending new strength to your attacks.

What you hear are psionic winds swirling around you. Your crude methods cause psionic power to bleed from you. Instead of dissipating, it swirls, blowing around you, unseen and unnoticed by any but you and the enemies who stand against you. When you reclaim this power, your body undergoes a strange transformation, becoming disjoined from reality for a moment or two before you snap back into place.

The more you work with this loosed psionic power, the more ephemeral you become. You can stir up the power to rip through your enemies' minds, or you can draw it into yourself to vanish and reappear where least expected.

Zephyr Blade Path Features

Beguiling Advantage (11th level): Your melee attacks against dazed, slowed, or stunned enemies deal extra damage to them equal to your Charisma modifier.

Paragon Power Points (11th level): You gain 2 additional power points.

Zephyr Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you are insubstantial and phasing until the start of your next turn.

Speed of the Wind (16th level): You gain a +2 bonus to speed. In addition, the move granted by your *speed of thought* power doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

Zephyr Blade Disciplines

Knifing Wind Zephyr Blade 11

As you slash your foe, you generate a psionic wind that knifes into your enemy's mind.

Encounter ✧ **Augmentable, Psionic, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.
Augment 2
Hit: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Mental Zephyr Zephyr Blade Utility 12

You feel the bite from your enemy's attack and let the winds howling within you infuse your flesh and pull you to safety.

Encounter ✧ **Psionic**
Immediate Reaction **Personal**
Trigger: An enemy hits you
Effect: You shift 1 square. Until the end of your next turn, you are insubstantial and phasing, and your attacks ignore the insubstantial quality.

Storm Dance Strike Zephyr Blade Attack 20

You become the screaming gale, encircling and buffeting your foes.

Daily ✧ **Psionic, Stance, Teleportation, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One or two creatures
Primary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Constitution modifier damage.
Effect: If you attack two creatures with this power, you teleport 5 squares between the first and the second attack. You assume the storm dance stance. Until the stance ends, you can make the following secondary attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Trigger: An adjacent enemy marked by you moves without shifting
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy
Secondary Attack: Constitution vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Constitution modifier damage, and the secondary target is slowed until the end of your next turn. In addition, you teleport 5 squares and then teleport the secondary target to a square adjacent to you.
Level 21: 2[W] + Constitution modifier damage.

Feats

Improved Speed of Thought

Prerequisite: Battlemind, *speed of thought* power
Benefit: When you use your *speed of thought*, you can move 2 additional squares.

Pursuing Step

Prerequisite: Battlemind, *blurred step* power
Benefit: When you use *blurred step*, if you end the shift adjacent to the triggering enemy, that enemy grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Demand's Reach

Prerequisite: 11th level, battlemind, *battlemind's demand* power
Benefit: The burst of your *battlemind's demand* increases to 5.

Linebreaker

Prerequisite: 11th level, battlemind, *speed of thought* power
Benefit: When you use your *speed of thought*, you can enter an enemy's space. Doing so ends the movement. You must then slide the enemy 1 square.

Vengeance Spike

Prerequisite: 21st level, battlemind, *mind spike* power
Benefit: When you damage a target with your *mind spike*, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls against that target until the end of your next turn.

About the Author

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Bazaar of the Bizarre

Legendary Figurines

Tales abound of figurines that harbor greater magic that when called forth transforms the animal statuettes into dangerous servants whose power is beyond imagining.

By Robert J. Schwalb
Illustrations by Matias Tapia

A Dungeons & Dragons® classic, the *figurines of wondrous power* made their return to the game in the *Adventurer's Vault*™ accessory. From the loyal *onyx dog* to the fearsome *golden lion*, adventurers had at their disposal constant companions they could call forth from their diminutive statue forms to aid them in battle. The nine items provide an ample selection for heroic adventurers, but what about paragon or epic tier adventurers?

The figurines presented in the *Adventurer's Vault* are the most common devices found in the D&D® world, but they are by no means the only ones. Tales abound of figurines that harbor greater magic that when called forth transforms the animal statuettes into dangerous servants whose power is beyond imagining. The following figurines expand on the options available, extending their use further into the game for characters beyond the heroic tier.

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Amber Monkeys

The three monkeys in this figurine are carved from a single piece of amber, all stacked up in a column. The top monkey has its hands over its eyes, the middle monkey has its hands over its ears, and the bottom monkey has its hands over its mouth. Each monkey wears a leering expression that would be amusing if it wasn't so sinister.

A mad wizard driven into exile in the Feywild carved the first *amber monkeys* in his jungle stronghold. Known for his wild simian slaves, he used them to wreak havoc on the enemies haunting his domain. Legend holds he bound the spirits of his most loyal servants into the figurine so that he could call upon them whenever he needed.

Amber Monkeys Level 13

Three amber monkeys stacked atop one another turn into screeching allies who await your command.

Wondrous Item 17,000 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure three screeching monkeys (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give each creature temporary hit points equal to one-third your healing surge value.

Power (At-Will): Standard Action. The figurine regains the use of its *monkey's curse* power.

3 Amber Monkeys

Small natural animate

Initiative as conjurer
Senses Perception +9; low-light vision

HP 27; **Bloodied** 13; see also *shared life*
AC 24; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 21
Speed 5

Bite (standard; at-will)
+16 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage.

Monkey's Curse (standard; encounter)
+13 vs. Reflex; the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls and loses line of sight to any creature not adjacent to it until the end of your next turn.

Monkey's Howl (minor; at-will)
Close burst 1; all creatures in the burst become deafened until the end of your next turn.

Hopping Monkeys (move; at-will) ✦ **Teleportation**
The amber monkey teleports 5 squares.

Shared Actions
The *amber monkeys* share one complement of actions (standard, move, and minor). When the conjurer issues a command, the command applies to all monkeys. So if the conjurer ordered the monkeys to make a *bite* attack, each monkey makes the attack. Likewise, if a conjurer ordered a monkey to use *hopping monkeys*, all the monkeys teleport.

Shared Life
The *amber monkeys* share one pool of hit points. When the *amber monkeys* drop to 18 hit points, remove one from play. Remove another from play at 9 hit points, and the last monkey disappears when they drop to 0 hit points.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –

Str 15 (+8)	**Dex** 22 (+12)	**Wis** 16 (+9)
Con 20 (+11)	**Int** 2 (+2)	**Cha** 6 (+4)

Using Figurines

When you activate a figurine, the conjured creature appears in a square or squares adjacent to you, provided the space is large enough to contain the creature without squeezing it. The creature obeys only you, responding to commands spoken in any language. The creature remains for 8 hours or until you use a minor action to dismiss it. The conjured creature acts on the same initiative count as you. Every action it takes costs you a minor action (which you use to issue commands), and a conjured creature cannot exceed its normal allotment of actions (a standard, a move, and a minor action) during its turn. If you spend no minor actions on your turn to command the creature, it remains where it is without taking any actions on its turn.

A conjured creature has hit points, defenses, and attacks as indicated in its statistics block. It has no healing surges and cannot be healed, though it can still benefit from temporary hit points. When reduced to 0 hit points or fewer, the conjured creature disappears, and it cannot be conjured again until after you take an extended rest.

Conjured creatures lack basic attacks and therefore cannot make opportunity attacks.

Mount: If the conjured creature has the mount keyword, you can ride the creature and are considered to have the Mounted Combat feat while mounted on it. While mounted, you can command the creature using a free action, though the mount is still limited to its normal allotment of actions. You can choose to be mounted on the creature when it appears.

Figurines of Wondrous Power

Lvl	Name	Price (gp)
13	Amber Monkeys	17,000
14	Emerald Frog	21,000
16	Mercury Wasp	45,000
17	Serpentine Owl	65,000
19	Bronze Griffon	105,000
21	Electrum Serpent	225,000
23	Tourmaline Turtle	425,000
25	Coral Dragon	625,000

Bronze Griffon

The fearsome griffon statuette rears back on its hind legs so that it can claw the air, and its beak is open as if screaming. When dormant, the statuette tends to snag clothing and pierce skin with casual handling, and after a few scars and ruined cloaks, possessors learn to handle these items with care.

The alchemist Boreanis crafted nine *bronze griffons* for nine eladrin lords as gifts for the esteemed heroes of the war between Corellon and Lolth. When the lords passed from life to death and from history to legend, the figurines scattered across the planes to owners less worthy than those to first use them. Many eladrin nobles have more than a passing interest in these items and would pay a fine reward for their recovery.

Reskinning Figurines

To a degree, the form a figurine takes is chosen for flavor. An *ebony fly*, for example, could just as well be an *alabaster swan* without having to change the statistics block in any way. When looking at the figurines, you might find one doesn't match your character's theme, appearance, or interests, but the mechanics do something you think can make the game more fun for you. Change the figurine's appearance to become another creature, but only as long as the new creature could have the same capabilities. An *onyx dog* could become an *onyx panther*, but an *ebony fly* couldn't become an *ebony yak*, since most yaks don't fly.

Bronze Griffon **Level 19**

With one command, the tiny bronze statuette vanishes and is replaced by a fearsome bronze griffon.

Wondrous Item 105,000 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure a ferocious griffon (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Bronze Griffon
Large natural animate (mount)

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +18
HP 24; **Bloodied** 12; see also *blood frenzy*
AC 30; **Fortitude** 30, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 28
Speed 6, fly 10

ǂ **Claws** (standard; at-will)
+22 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage.

ǂ **Aggressive Charger** (while mounted by a friendly rider of 19th level or higher) ✦ **Mount**
When charging, the bronze griffon makes a *claws* attack in addition to its rider's charge attack.

Blood Frenzy (while it or its rider is bloodied)
The bronze griffon gains a +2 bonus to its speed, its fly speed, and its attack rolls.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –

Str 24 (+16)	**Dex** 23 (+15)	**Wis** 19 (+13)
Con 22 (+15)	**Int** 2 (+5)	**Cha** 6 (+7)

Coral Dragon

Some believe the fragile *coral dragons* were the first figurines created and that they house the spirits of those noble dragons who aided Bahamut and Tiamat in overcoming the King of Terror. Others claim the *coral dragons* are not figurines at all, but are instead memories of forgotten dragon gods from another world. Regardless of their origins, seers and diviners prize these relics for the wisdom they contain, while cruder champions see great power in the violence of which the figurines are capable.

Coral dragons are unusual in that they possess cunning and wisdom that persists when inert. The dragon's personality varies from figurine to figurine, but many possess great arrogance and expect their possessors to show them respect. A few champion specific causes, urging their possessors to advance good (or evil) in the world.

Coral Dragon **Level 25**

An unusually large figurine, nearly a foot long, this delicate multicolored statuette is old.

Wondrous Item 625,000 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure a multicolored dragon that has long whiskers drooping from its snout and a lithe body that coils and uncoils with agitation (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Power (Daily): Standard Action. You perform the Loremaster's Bargain ritual without expending components (*Player's Handbook*, page 308). The ritual functions as described except you make a History check in place of the Religion check, and determine your bonus to checks made during the skill challenge based on your History check result.

Power (At-Will): Standard Action. The coral dragon regains the use of its *breath weapon* power.

Coral Dragon
Small natural animate (aquatic)

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +20; truesight 5

HP 30; **Bloodied** 15

AC 37; **Fortitude** 36, **Reflex** 33, **Will** 35

Speed 6, fly 10, swim 6

Bite (standard; at-will)
+28 vs. AC; 2d6 + 9 damage.

Raking Claws (standard; at-will)
The dragon flies 10 squares. At any two points during this move it makes the following attack: +28 vs. AC; 1d10 + 9 damage.

Breath Weapon (standard; encounter)
Close blast 5; +26 vs. Fortitude; the dragon pushes the target 5 squares.

Ancient Wisdom (minor 1/round; encounter)
The dragon grants a +10 power bonus to the conjurer's knowledge check or monster knowledge check made before the end of the conjurer's next turn.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Draconic

Str 28 (+21)	**Dex** 23 (+18)	**Wis** 26 (+20)
Con 23 (+18)	**Int** 18 (+16)	**Cha** 21 (+17)

Electrum Serpent

The delicate electrum serpent frequently dangles from a thin chain so that it can be worn about the neck, but a few include pins to serve as pendants as well. Additionally, others might be standard 2-inch tall statuettes.

The electrum serpent is a strange figurine in that it seems to contain two creatures in one. One command summons forth a fearsome snake that streaks across the battlefield and sinks foot-long fangs into its foes. A second command summons a transparent serpent with milk-white scales that slithers and coils around its master or ally to bestow new life and vigor. Neither serpent ever appears at the same time, though some legends claim the serpents would turn upon each other if they both did appear at once.

Electrum Serpent **Level 21**

The silvery statuette features tiny jade slivers as its eyes, a color it retains when you conjure the creature housed within it.

Wondrous Item 225,000 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure either a metallic serpent or a translucent serpent (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Power (At-Will): Standard Action. The metallic electrum serpent regains the use of its *constricting serpent* power.

Power (Encounter): Standard Action. The transparent electrum serpent regains the use of its *soothing serpent* power.

Electrum Serpent
Large natural animate (reptile)

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +19; low-light vision

HP 26; **Bloodied** 13

AC 33; **Fortitude** 31, **Reflex** 32, **Will** 29

Resist insubstantial (translucent serpent only)

Speed 6, climb 6, swim 6

Bite (standard; at-will) ✦ **Acid, Poison**
+22 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid and poison damage (save ends).

Constricting Serpent (standard; metallic serpent only; encounter) ✦ **Acid**
+22 vs. Reflex; the target is grabbed (escape ends). Each time the target starts its turn grabbed by the electrum serpent, it takes 10 acid damage.

Soothing Serpent (standard; translucent serpent only; encounter) ✦ **Healing**
Targets one ally; the electrum serpent enters the target's space and coils around the target creature, where it remains until commanded to move. As a minor action, while the serpent is so coiled, the conjurer can issue a command to allow the ally to spend a healing surge or make a saving throw.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –

Str 24 (+17)	**Dex** 22 (+16)	**Wis** 18 (+14)
Con 21 (+15)	**Int** 2 (+6)	**Cha** 6 (+8)

Emerald Frog

Portraits depicting Khyaran the Profound all share one odd feature. In every painting, the artist included an inch-long emerald frog. Many at first believed the inclusion of the frog to be an affectation of the artist—Khyaran relied on the great talent of Ruobald Kent, whose talent with the brush exceeded all his contemporaries. Later, most rejected the theory because the frog never appeared in any of Kent's other works. The frog then remained a mystery until an adventuring group located the Profound's tomb and recovered the frog, learning of its unusual magical properties.

Since the *emerald frog's* rediscovery, many artificers and alchemists have sought to reproduce its curious

magic to create new figurines modeled after the first. These copies are worthwhile, but none of them come close to matching the original's power. Some say the frog, despite its modest size, could swallow a dragon whole, though the methods by which it achieved this are thus far beyond any artisan's understanding.

Emerald Frog **Level 14**

The delicate emerald statuette of a tiny frog contains a smaller speck of darkness inside it.

Wondrous Item 21,000 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure an innocuous emerald frog (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Emerald Frog
Tiny natural animate

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +10
HP 19; **Bloodied** 9
AC 25; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 22
Speed 4

Grasping Tongue (standard; at-will)
+14 vs. Reflex; the target is immobilized until the end of the frog's next turn.

Distant Origin
The conjurer can use the square the emerald frog occupies as the origin square for his or her nonweapon ranged and close attack powers, and the frog is not affected by such powers when it is used as the origin square.

Frog Hop (move; at-will)
The frog jumps 6 squares.

Shared Perspective
The conjurer can see through the emerald frog's eyes. While the emerald frog has line of sight to the conjurer, enemies cannot gain combat advantage against the conjurer by flanking the conjurer.

Hopping Escape (immediate reaction, when the frog is missed by a melee attack; at will)
The emerald frog shifts 2 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –

Str 1 (+2)	**Dex** 24 (+14)	**Wis** 16 (+10)
Con 21 (+12)	**Int** 2 (+3)	**Cha** 6 (+5)

Mercury Wasp

Shifting dunes, obsidian islands, and nomadic tiefling bands are all that remain of the once mighty empire obliterated by devastating magic long ago. Called the Sea of Dust, few dare travel the trackless wastes because terrors beyond counting exist here, and the area's landscape is as dangerous as the fiercest monster. For all the dangers it poses, adventurers still mount expeditions into the wastes in hopes of recovering the fabulous treasures believed to be housed in lost ruins and decimated cities. Few adventurers recover items, but the rare magic discovered is enough to draw new explorers from all over the world.

The *mercury wasps* were uncovered from the fabled Forgotten City. Mages deemed the items to be *figurines of wondrous power* since they shared the same properties as other items, but they had one distinctive quality. Rather than conjure a single creature, the figurine summoned a swarm of thumb-size black wasps that seethed and hummed with unexpected fury. Many believe these wasps speak to the character of the lost peoples destroyed long ago.

Mercury Wasp **Level 16**

This curious glass figurine contains quicksilver.

Wondrous Item 45,000 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure a swarm of stinging wasps (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Power (At-Will): Standard Action. The mercury wasp swarm regains the use of its *angry swarm* power.

Mercury Wasp Swarm
Medium natural animate (swarm)

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +11; tremorsense 5

Cloud of Stingers (Poison) aura 1; any creature other than the conjurer that starts its turn within the aura takes 5 poison damage.

HP 21; **Bloodied** 10
AC 27; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 26, **Will** 24
Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks; **Vulnerable** 5 against close and area attacks
Speed 1, fly 4 (hover, altitude limit 2)

Stinging Swarm (standard; at-will) ✦ **Poison**
+17 vs. Fortitude; 2d10 poison damage.

Angry Swarm (standard; encounter) ✦ **Poison**
Close burst 1; + 17 vs. Fortitude; 2d10 poison damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –

Str 10 (+8)	**Dex** 23 (+14)	**Wis** 17 (+11)
Con 21 (+13)	**Int** 1 (+3)	**Cha** 1 (+3)

Serpentine Owl

Many believe that explorers fashioned these owls to serve as companions and scouts for the first elves who traveled the world. The explorers used them to scout for suitable sites in which the elves could establish new communities beyond their native plane. Adventurers have recovered many *serpentine owls* and other figurines from these ruins, suggesting the complete collection owes its existence to these earliest mages and mystics.

Serpentine Owl **Level 17**

This serpentine statuette can serve as a messenger, guide, or guardian, depending on the command you give it.

Wondrous Item 65,000 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure a giant owl with green and brown feathers (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure a Tiny owl that behaves as if you had performed the Animal Messenger ritual (*Player's Handbook*, page 300) or the Animal Friendship ritual (*Player's Handbook* 2, page 212) chosen at the time when you use this power. You do not expend components for these rituals. When you next take an extended rest or when the effect of either ritual ends, the serpentine owl returns to you in its normal statuette form.

Power (At-Will): Standard Action. The serpentine owl regains the use of its *swooping claws* power.

Serpentine Owl
Medium natural animate

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +20; darkvision

HP 22; **Bloodied** 11

AC 28; **Fortitude** 26, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 28

Speed 4, fly 8

ǂ **Claws** (standard; at-will)
+20 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.

ǂ **Swooping Claws** (standard; encounter)
The *serpentine owl* flies 8 squares and makes a claws attack at any one point during its movement. The owl does not provoke opportunity attacks from the target of this attack when moving. If the *serpentine owl* hits a Medium or smaller target with this attack, the target falls prone.

Combat Advantage
The owl's *claws* attack deals 1d6 extra damage against any target granting combat advantage to it.

Owl's Boon
The conjurer gains darkvision as long as it remains within 5 squares of the *serpentine owl*.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** telepathy 10

Skills Stealth +19

Str 21 (+13)	**Dex** 23 (+14)	**Wis** 24 (+15)
Con 16 (+11)	**Int** 4 (+5)	**Cha** 10 (+8)

Tourmaline Turtle

Among the most powerful figurines is the coveted *tourmaline turtle*. The figurine is not so much prized for its considerable power in battle, but for the utility it offers to its conjurer. The turtle, when called forth from the small carving, is enormous, with a mighty structure on its back offering shelter and comfort to those permitted entry. Furthermore, the device also functions as a vehicle, allowing passengers to cross the planes with but a single command.

Tourmaline Turtle **Level 23**

On your command, the carving swells in size to become a mighty turtle that can carry you wherever you wish to travel.

Wondrous Item 425,000 gp

Property: While conjured, the tourmaline turtle is considered a navigation focus for the Plane Shift ritual (*Manual of the Planes*™, page 150). When traveling to other planes using that ritual, the *tourmaline turtle* must move from one large body of water (or other liquid) to another. After transporting, the *tourmaline turtle* disappears and it cannot be conjured again until after the conjurer takes an extended rest.

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure a massive turtle capable of carrying you and your allies on its back (see below for statistics). There must be a body of water adjacent to you in which the turtle can appear; otherwise you cannot use this power. As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Tourmaline Turtle
Gargantuan natural animate (aquatic, mount)

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +17
Airy Water aura 5; allies within the aura can breathe normally and speak normally while underwater.
HP 28; **Bloodied** 14
AC 34; **Fortitude** 35, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 32
Speed 1, swim 4

Bite (standard; at-will)
Reach 2; +26 vs. AC; 2d8 + 9 damage.

Multiple Riders
The *tourmaline turtle* can carry up to twelve Medium or Small characters weighing no more than 14,400 pounds. If more than 14,400 pounds are placed on it, the turtle disappears and cannot be conjured again until after the conjurer takes an extended rest.

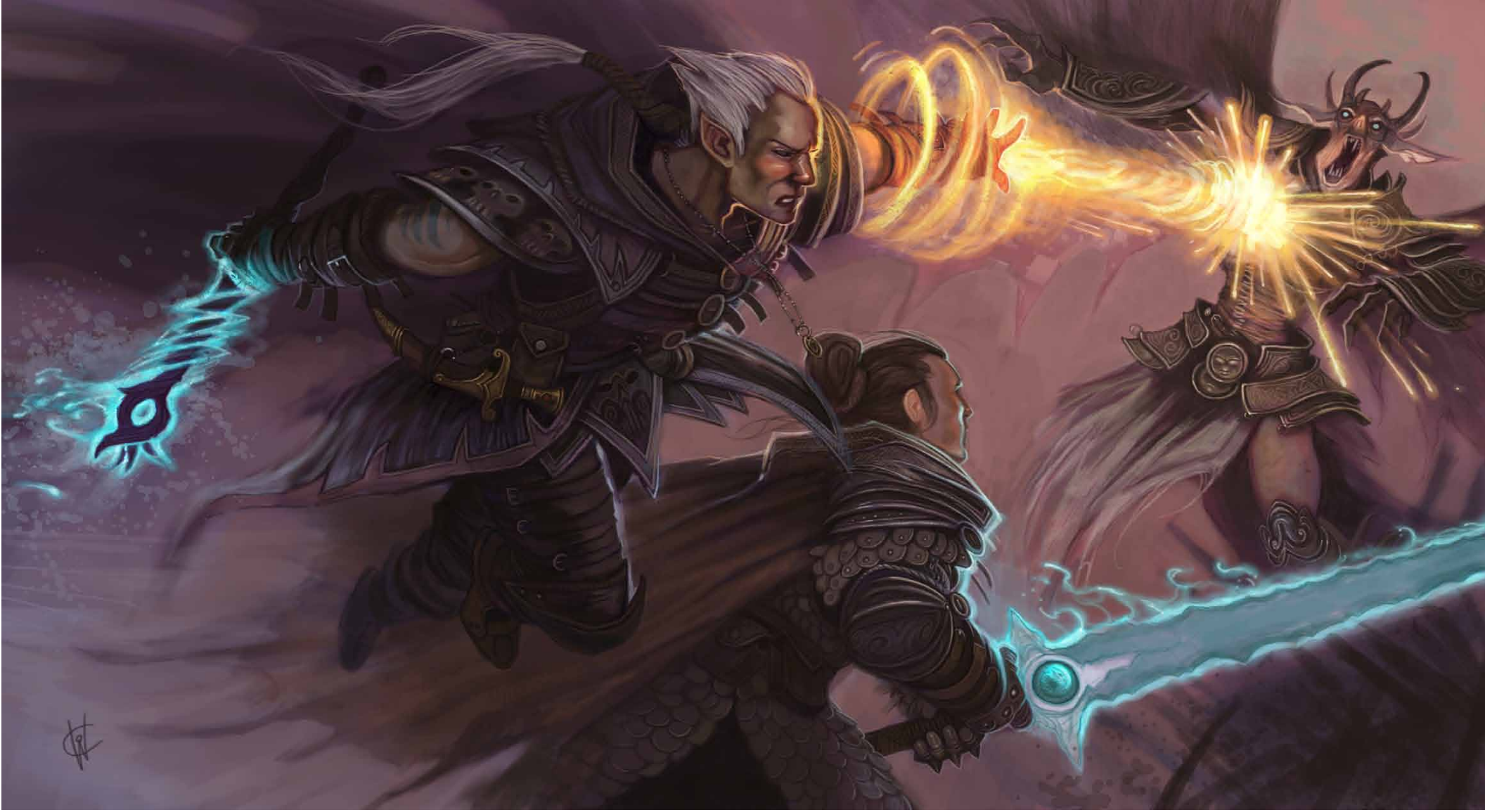
Tourmaline Shell ✦ Mount
Creatures riding the *tourmaline turtle* are protected from environmental effects.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –

Str 28 (+20)	**Dex** 21 (+16)	**Wis** 23 (+17)
Con 26 (+19)	**Int** 2 (+7)	**Cha** 6 (+9)

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose more recent work can be found in the *Player's Handbook 3®*, *Martial Power 2™*, and *Draconomicon™ 2: Metallic Dragons*. Robert would like to thank Teeuwynn Woodruff and Tim Beach for the inspiration and ideas drawn from their *Bazaar of the Bizarre* article in *Dragon®* #196.



"The ignorant believe that we bargain for power.
Some even think we sell our souls for it.
They say we serve mysterious masters.
The truth—the truth that they fear—is that when
you master yourself, you have no masters."
—Dav Regis,
instructor at the Vermillion Academy

Warlock Basics

By Matthew Sernett
Illustrations by William O'Connor and Tyler Walpole

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Power flows from many sources. For those who study dusty tomes or seek out wrinkled sages, knowledge is power. For those willing to beg upon bended knee, power is a reward. Warlocks walk a straighter path: Power comes from those who possess it, and if you want that power, take it from them.

Warlocks receive their arcane abilities through a bargain or ritual. A link with supernatural forces gives each warlock the ability to siphon the power of distant beings. Whether these entities know how the warlock uses their might or if they are somehow weakened or harmed by it matters little. A deal is a deal.

The Basics

"A warlock's magic is not for the weak of will or weak of heart. You must have the courage of the thief to take the power and the fortitude of the warrior to keep it. Lack either, and you might have to keep the promises you make."

–Raigen Zul, tiefling hexer

A warlock occupies the striker role, so one typically works best when the character is causing a lot of damage from range and staying out of melee. However, much of the warlock's increased-damage potential stems from judicious use of Warlock's Curse. This ability relies upon the warlock targeting the nearest enemy. It works out fine in the fight against the solo monster, but when facing multiple foes, it can be very useful to have powers and magic items that provide for mobility so that you can position yourself to attack the foe you want instead of whatever foe happens to advance upon your position.

A warlock can also help the party by providing some elements of control that typically affect a single target. Look for powers that slow, daze, immobilize, restrain, or stun since these can help you limit the movement of enemies and keep them the nearest target or allowing your allies to maneuver and gain tactical advantage.

Eldritch Blast

Unlike most other classes, a warlock is assigned one at-will power at first level, and the other is determined by the warlock's *Eldritch Pact*. Fortunately, the assigned power is *eldritch blast*. This ranged power delivers high damage, has a decent range, and acts as a basic attack. You can choose at character creation whether to use Charisma or Constitution with the power, but that choice should depend on which *Eldritch Pact* you've chosen since the powers associated with each pact often favor one ability or the other.

Eldritch Pact

Warlocks take their powers from otherworldly entities through a pact that binds the entities' power to them. Your choice of pact reveals something important about who your character is, but it also affects your character-building choices.

Fey Pact

"Few think of the power of those in the Feywild, but just as its mountains rise higher and forests fold darker, so too are its kings greater and their magic more wondrous."

–Riddle Warryn, gnome footman to the Prince of Frost

Your highest ability score should be Charisma, but many of your best power options also benefit from a high Intelligence. Avoid a high Constitution and powers that use Constitution as their basis. The Misty Step pact boon you gain from this pact allows you to teleport, and if you use it to travel 3 squares you'll also be benefiting from concealment due to Shadow Walk.

Feats: Improved Misty Step (*Player's Handbook*)

Infernal Pact

"I've made my promises to the infernal powers, and they've taken all they can from me. Now it's my turn to use them. Hell hath no fury I fear."

–Sancha, tiefling lost soul

Your highest ability score should be Constitution followed closely by Intelligence. Avoid powers that rely on Charisma. Since many infernal pact powers deal fire damage, look for ways to change the damage type of a power or add a damage type. Arcane Admixture from *Arcane Power* is an obvious choice at paragon level.

Feats: Improved Dark One's Blessing (*Player's Handbook*)

Star Pact

"Have you seen the stars tonight? Did you see them dancing? Can you hear the dreams they whisper when you sleep?"
–Rillia, half-elf student of Caiphon

The special benefits you gain from the star pact often rely upon Intelligence, but the ability score you use to attack might be Constitution or Charisma. Instead of trying to keep three ability scores high, you might want to pick one path or another based upon if you prefer the Constitution- or Charisma-based powers.

Your Fate of the Void pact boon gets really good when multiple foes you curse die in the same round. Keep this in mind when fighting minions. You can curse minions that other characters kill so that your attacks against the main enemy are more likely to hit.

Feats: Improved Fate of the Void (*Player's Handbook*)

Dark Pact

"We keep our darkest secrets close to our hearts. So too is it with the world. The shadows you find in the Underdark are deeper than all others and hide the greatest mysteries."
–Tezzym Veladorn, drow darkwalker

The *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* provides the option of the Dark Pact, a pact with beings that dwell in the shadows of the Underdark. Charisma and Intelligence should be your highest ability scores. The Darkspiral Aura pact boon you gain from this pact is complicated but potent. Curse and kill a lot of minions to rack up a high Darkspiral Aura total, but don't wait too long before using the ability. Even a short rest wipes out the total, so fire away!

Feats: Demonweb Spiral, Improved Darkspiral Aura (both from the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide*)

YOUR ELDRITCH PACT

How did you come by your mysterious powers? Did you embark upon this path in full knowledge of its dangers, was your pact something of joke that suddenly became serious, or were you forced to swear to the pact for some reason? Below are some ideas for how a warlock might have discovered each type of pact. Pick one for your history or allow one to inspire your own idea.

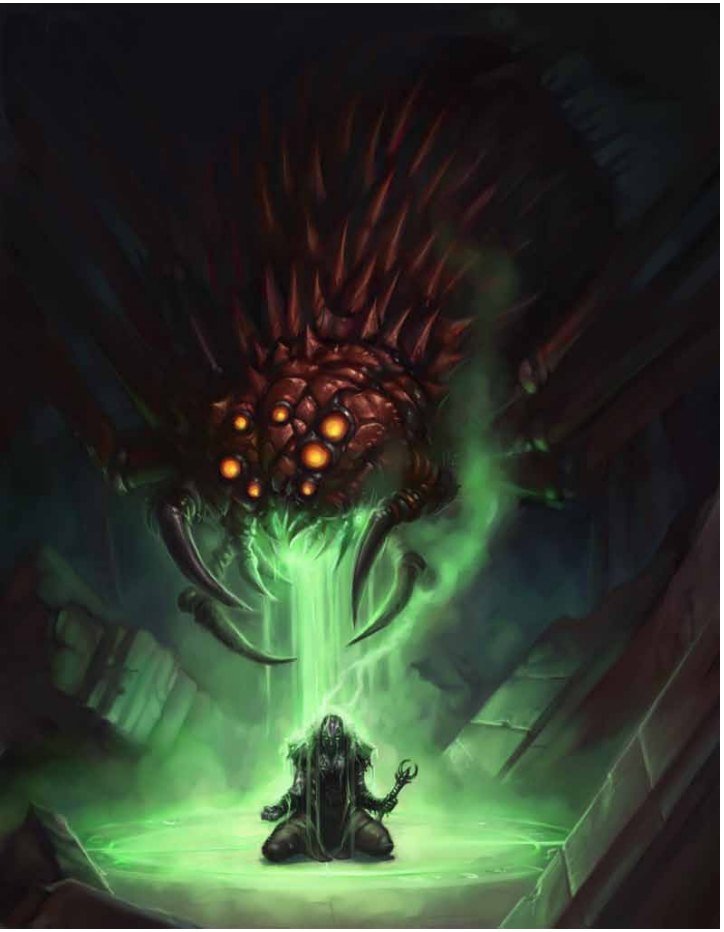
Fey Pact
- ✦ As a child you were kidnapped by fey, brought to the Feywild, and replaced by a changeling. You stole some of the power of the fey when you escaped.
- ✦ You engaged in an ill-fated romance with a member of the Court of Stars. Your pact is a memento.
- ✦ A sibling was stolen away by fey, and your pact secured your sibling's return.

Infernal Pact
- ✦ You made a deal with a devil—simple as that.
- ✦ You interrupted the ritual of a devil cult and had the powers of the ritual transmitted to you rather than the intended target.
- ✦ You were born with a connection to the Hells, and it has caused you woe since you were born.

Star Pact
- ✦ You did not seek this power. The stars called out to you and bid you take it. They speak with you still.
- ✦ You were born under a strange star and bear birthmarks of important constellations.
- ✦ In dreams you can hardly remember, you spoke to unfathomable beings of great power and made promises you have now forgotten.

Dark Pact
- ✦ You were enslaved by drow and made a pact with dark beings to escape your captors.
- ✦ You were trained by a drow outcast and became an outcast yourself for associating with the dark elf.
- ✦ Your father was an adventurer driven mad by the horrors of the Underdark, but from his ramblings you learned something of the ways of magic.

Vestige Pact
- ✦ Your people respect the ancient ways and venerate the vestiges.
- ✦ You are a descendant of King Elidyr and might have ruled an empire had Nerath not fallen to the gnolls. Now the king speaks to you in the hopes you will return Nerath to glory.
- ✦ It was an accident. You read aloud from a strange old book you stole and suddenly spirits were with you.



Vestige Pact

"I call upon you Khaeleth. Give to me that which you granted to the kings of old, and I shall make your name live in the memory of the world again."

—Argonek, human warlock

Arcane Power offers the Vestige Pact, a pact made with forgotten spirits of the world. Constitution should be your highest score, with Intelligence being high as well. You gain different benefits from the pact depending on which vestige aids you at the moment. This looks complex but in practice it's simple. Many powers grant you an extra benefit regardless of the vestige you choose, and, when you use a daily power, you can choose to change the Pact Boon from which you benefit. Remember to take a look at the Pact Boon in such daily powers and decide if the switch makes sense during the combat.

Feats: Vestige Adept, Vestige Mastery, Vestige Versatility (all from *Arcane Power*)

Prime Shot

Your +1 to hit from Prime Shot applies only to ranged attacks, so don't worry about it when making a close, area, or melee attack. Using this ability often puts you at risk, so you need to be careful if you seek its benefit. If you're the nearest person to your foe and using a ranged attack, it's a good bet that your enemy is going to be in melee with you soon.

Feats: *Dragon Magazine Annual 2009* offers the useful Called Shot feat for paragon-level characters. This provides a +5 damage bonus whenever you hit a target of Prime Shot!

Shadow Walk

Shadow Walk is a nifty ability that grants you a little extra defense thanks to concealment. You don't gain total concealment from the power so you can't hide in it, but the -2 penalty to attack rolls against you means it's something you should keep in mind each turn. You don't have to move—especially if you're not in danger of being attacked—but you might find that moving after you attack allows you to curse another foe, and as long as you've already moved, you might as well gain the benefit.

Feats: *Arcane Power* provides the useful Empowering Shadows feat, which provides a +1 bonus to damage rolls when you benefit from concealment due to Shadow Walk. Although not overwhelming, the bonus to damage rolls has no type and can stack with bonuses to damage rolls you gain from other sources. At epic level, Ephemeral Stride from *Arcane Power* allows you to move through enemy squares without provoking opportunity attacks while benefiting from Shadow Walk. This could be a useful ability, but hopefully you're teleporting around the battlefield by that level. If you need it, you'll know.

Warlock's Curse

Warlock's Curse is the meat and potatoes of your striker damage output. Unfortunately, to put a curse on a foe, that enemy needs to be the nearest one to you. Once it's on, the curse works for the rest of the encounter regardless of where the enemy goes, but it can be tough do your part when the enemy is screened by a bunch of minions or other dangers stand between you and the best target of your attacks.

Look for ways to teleport and otherwise move swiftly around the battlefield so that you can curse

whomever you want. If you don't have access to that kind of mobility, consider moving around the battlefield so that you can curse multiple foes but maintain attacks against a single enemy. You might attack your chosen foe, move so that another foe is nearest and curse it, and then move back to attack your chosen enemy on the following round. This way you're gaining the benefit of Warlock's Curse and Shadow Walk, and when that chosen foe falls, you receive the benefit of your pact boon and your new target is already cursed.

Feats: *Arcane Power* presents several good options. If you're a human warlock, consider Reckless Curse at heroic level. Its bonus to attack rolls stacks with Prime Shot, and hopefully your target is more likely to attack the defender than you. At paragon tier, Twofold Curse presents the best option, allowing you to curse the two nearest enemies with a minor action—an ability that can save you a lot of tactical maneuvering on the battlefield. At epic level, you can take Warding Curse, which provides a +2 bonus to all defenses when a creature you cursed attacks you. Also, consider the feats in this article.

Warlock Builds

You can differentiate your warlock with your choice of pact and powers, and they should determine your highest ability score as described above. Each pact thus ends up being a build of its own to some degree, but warlocks largely function in the same way: You want to stay at range and control which enemy is nearest to you.

A number of warlock powers have a close range of a few squares, but those should be occasional choices to deal with foes who move too close. Building your character to stand within 2 squares of melee and use close powers means that you'll likely fail to benefit both from Prime Shot and Shadow Walk. You'll end up devoting a lot of character resources, such as feats and magic items, to make your tactical choice feasible rather than powerful.

Power Selection

Choose powers that provide you with an extra benefit due to your Eldritch Pact. There might be some levels where a better option exists for your character, but for the most part, the pact benefit on a spell provides a straight power boost over other powers of the same level.

Although the *Player's Handbook* lists the pact associated with a spell, it does not limit who can take that spell by Eldritch Pact; later sources don't bother listing the pact for that reason.

Race and Pact

Races that provide bonuses to Charisma, Constitution, or Intelligence work best, and the ability scores that benefit from a racial bonus determine which Eldritch Pact will utilize the ability scores the most. The table below outlines which choices are best for each player character race, taking into account both ability score bonuses and other racial abilities. Races without relevant bonuses to abilities and no beneficial racial traits are denoted with "None." Some others bear special mention due to their unique suitability.

Changeling: Changelings gain a +2 to Charisma and can choose to gain a +2 to Intelligence. This makes them well-suited to the dark, fey, and star pacts. Given their racial bonus to Bluff checks, being trained in Bluff and taking the *beguiling tongue* power from *Player's Handbook* makes for a fun choice.

Githyanki: Githyanki make excellent warlocks, but the Lich Queen has outlawed all such ties to other powers unless by her express permission. Warlocks with star pacts are the most closely watched. The lich queen suspects a Far Realm connection in star pacts, but she uses such warlocks against aberrant beings such as mind flayers for the time being.

Gnome: Gnomes readily become warlocks, and many adopt the fey pact. Thanks to Shadow Walk and the Reactive Stealth racial ability, you could conceivably start many combats with concealment and be hidden until at least the end of your first turn. Unfortunately, warlocks can't choose training in Stealth as a starting skill. Consider the Shadow Initiate feat from *Dragon* #379; it gives you training in Stealth and access to the *assassin's shroud* power.

Half-Elf: A half-elf can be a strong warlock using any pact, but the at-will power you take from another class might influence your choice. Given that the warlock is one of the only classes that uses Constitution for attack rolls with at-will powers, you might want to make Charisma your highest ability score and choose the dark, fey, or star pact. Then you should look at the bard and sorcerer for your extra at-will power since those classes use Charisma to attack.

Hobgoblin: Like the half-elf, a hobgoblin warlock can work well as a warlock with any pact. The infernal pact is most common among the militaristic goblinoids as they take inspiration from the legendary discipline of the legions of Hell. You might consider taking the star pact and attempting to keep two ability scores equally high. This would allow you to use all the star pact powers with equal ability.

Tiefling: Tieflings make excellent warlocks but an odd dissonance exists between their racial abilities and the pact that makes the most sense for a tiefling character: Tieflings gain a bonus to Charisma and Intelligence, but the powers that benefit from the infernal pact use Constitution. If you play a tiefling with an infernal pact, take the Hellfire Blood feat and consider the feats in the upcoming *Player's Handbook Races: Tieflings* for more advantageous feats.

Race	Pacts
Bladeling	None
Bugbear	None
Bullywug	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Changeling	Dark, Fey, Star
Deva	Any
Doppelganger	Dark, Fey, Star
Dragonborn	Dark, Fey, Star
Drow	Dark, Fey, Star
Duergar	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Dwarf	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Eladrin	Any
Elf	None
Genasi	Any
Githyanki	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Githzerai	None
Gnoll	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Gnome	Dark, Fey, Star
Goblin	Dark, Fey, Star
Goliath	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Half-elf	Any
Half-orc	None
Halfling	Dark, Fey, Star
Hobgoblin	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Human	Any
Kalashtar	Dark, Fey, Star
Kenku	Dark, Fey, Star
Kobold	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Minotaur	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Orc	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Revenant	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Shadar-kai	Any
Longtooth shifter	None
Razorclaw shifter	None
Tiefling	Dark, Fey, Star
Warforged	Infernal, Star, Vestige
Wilden	Infernal, Star, Vestige

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Bloodied Boon

Prerequisite: Warlock, Eldritch Pact class feature, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: You can choose to gain your pact boon when an enemy you curse is first bloodied. If you do so, you remove your curse from that enemy.

Brutal Curse

Prerequisite: Warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: When you roll your Warlock's Curse damage, reroll any die that displays a 1 until you have a result of 2 or higher.

Curse of Displacement

Prerequisite: Warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: When you score a critical hit against the target of your Warlock's Curse, you teleport the target 3 squares as a free action.

Cursed Shot

Prerequisite: Warlock, Prime Shot class feature, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: When determining who is nearest for the purposes of the Prime Shot class feature, you ignore all allies adjacent to you, as well as allies who are helpless, stunned, dominated, unconscious, or petrified.

Exultant Shadow Step

Prerequisite: Warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefits: When you score a critical hit against the target of your Warlock's Curse, you can teleport 4 squares as a free action.

Killing Curse

Prerequisite: Warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: The extra damage dice from your Warlock's Curse class feature increase from d6s to d8s.

Primed Curse

Prerequisite: Warlock, Prime Shot class feature, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: The bonus to attack rolls granted by Prime Shot increases to +2 if the target is also cursed by you.

Prolonged Curse

Prerequisite: Warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: When you hit a target with a warlock attack that deals ongoing damage, increase the ongoing damage by 1 point per Warlock's Curse die you roll.

Warlock's Sight

Prerequisite: Warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: You don't take the normal -2 penalty to attack rolls if your target has cover or concealment as long as your target is cursed by you.

Paragon Tier Feats

Feats in this section are available to any characters of 11th level and above who meet the prerequisites.

Curse of the Blind Stars

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: When you hit a cursed foe with an encounter or daily warlock attack that causes radiant damage, you can forgo dealing Warlock's Curse damage to instead cause the target to become blinded until the end of your next turn.

Fey Revel Glamor

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature, fey pact

Benefit: Whenever you deal Warlock's Curse damage to a target and do so with a warlock daily attack power, the target is slowed (save ends). If the power already subjects the target to a slowing effect that a save can end, the target is instead immobilized (save ends).

Hell's Chosen

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, multiclass divine class, infernal pact, *eldritch blast*

Benefit: Whenever you would deal Warlock's Curse damage against an enemy, you can choose to treat that damage as fire damage. In addition, you can have your *eldritch blast* deal fire damage.

Hellfire Hex

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature, infernal pact

Benefit: Whenever you deal Warlock's Curse damage to a target with a warlock daily attack power, the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). If the power already deals ongoing fire damage, instead increase that ongoing damage by 5.

Protective Hex

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: When you hit an enemy you have cursed with an attack, that enemy takes a -2 penalty to close and melee attacks against your allies until the end of your next turn.

Sibling to the Stars

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, multiclass divine class, star pact, *eldritch blast*

Benefit: Whenever you would deal Warlock's Curse damage against an enemy, you can choose to treat that damage as radiant damage. In addition, you can have your *eldritch blast* deal radiant damage.

Veil of Waking Dreams

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature, star pact

Benefit: Whenever you deal Warlock's Curse damage to a target and do so with a warlock daily attack power, the target is dazed (save ends). If the power already subjects the target to a dazing effect that a save can end, the target is instead dazed and takes ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends both).

Epic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 21st level who meets the prerequisites.

Critical Curse

Prerequisite: 21st level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: If you score a critical hit with a warlock power, you can apply your Warlock's Curse damage if you have it available, even if the target is not cursed by you.

Contagious Curse

Prerequisite: 21st level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: When an enemy cursed by you drops to 0 hit points, you can curse all enemies adjacent to the target as a free action.

Cursed Spells

Prerequisite: 21st level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: You add your Intelligence modifier to the extra damage dealt by your Warlock's Curse.

Inevitable Doom

Prerequisite: 21st level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: If you miss a cursed enemy with an attack and deal no damage to it, you gain a +1d6 bonus to your next damage roll against it made before the end of the encounter. Each time you miss the target with the attack, increase the damage bonus by 1d6.

Mind-Numbing Curse

Prerequisite: 21st level, warlock, Warlock's Curse class feature

Benefit: When you hit a cursed foe with an encounter or daily warlock attack that causes psychic damage, you can forgo dealing Warlock's Curse damage to instead cause the target to become dazed until the end of your next turn.

About the Author

Matthew Sernett is a writer and game designer for Wizards of the Coast who splits his time between Dungeons & Dragons® and **Magic: The Gathering**®. Recent credits include *Player's Handbook® Races: Tieflings*, *The Plane Above™: Secrets of the Astral Sea*, and *Magic the Gathering: Zendikar™*. When he's not making monsters or building worlds, he's watching bad fantasy movies you don't realize exist and shouldn't bother to learn about.

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To Walk on Unseen Paths

By Ari Marmell

Illustration by Tyler Jacobson

The depths of the darkened woods, the rock faces of the jagged hills, and the foul reaches of the stagnant swamps are all as frightening, as mysterious, and as foreign to the average commoner as if they truly were alien worlds. And, in some instances, they are. Warnings to remain clear of toadstool rings, to shun strange lights in the forest, and to avoid killing certain sorts of birds in flight are more than rural superstition. In some regions, at least, they represent dangers as real as the weather or the predators of the wild, because here the influence of the Feywild seeps into the natural world. Where the trees grow thickest and the waters run deep, the realm of the fey casts its shadows into the realm of mortals, because nature becomes a doorway between them.

And those who were born nearby—those who walk these unseen paths and those who learn the ways of the natural world beneath the Feywild's influence—are subtly different from others of their ilk.

THE UNSEEN PATH

In many parts of the world, the overlap between the middle realm and the Feywild is blatantly obvious. Terrain and scenery change abruptly, fey creatures are common, magic looks peculiar, and one can easily and clearly step from one reality to another. But not all places where the walls are weak between the mortal and fey worlds are nearly so obvious; perhaps even *most* of them are not. Twisting backwoods trails wind through the mists between planes, subjecting travelers to the influence of both worlds. Arches of branches and standing stones mark hidden doorways, and groves exist more fully in the mortal world, or more fully in the Feywild, based on season or time of day.

Sages call this sort of phenomenon "planar bleed." But among those who hunt and trap and adventure within such regions, they are often known as the Unseen Path.

Rangers who walk the Unseen Path are a peculiar sort. They're not magic-users any more than other rangers are such, but something of the fey is about them, and they have a bond with the natural world that other rangers do not share. They frequently appear to see or hear what others do not, and they gaze at the world through faintly alien eyes. A few such rangers hail from the Feywild, but most are humans or other natural world humanoids who were born, or who learned the ways of the wild, within one of these fey-touched realms. Their exploits border on the supernatural, touching the very edges of fey magic without ever crossing over.

Those who walk the Unseen Path do not form an organization or an order in any formal sense. Rather, the environment has affected these individuals in the same way, and they share similar beliefs and attitudes toward nature, the Feywild, and the horrors of the world. They often recognize one another on sight, and when they band together, they do so more by instinct than by intent. They follow similar philosophies and they respect the same forebears—but never officially and never by design. They gather due to intuition and mutual interest, much like the predators with whom they share their woods, their valleys, and their fields.

Goals: The Unseen Path seeks harmony between the Feywild and the natural world. They work to protect those people who live near these areas of planar bleed from the dangers of the other plane—be it the Feywild encroaching on the world, or vice-versa—and to protect the wilds of both worlds from outside threats, such as aberrants, demons, and twisted fey. They are not innately opposed to the growth of civilization or reasonable exploitation of nature, but they do attempt to guide civilized peoples into adapting to the natural environment, rather than razing it.

Walkers of the Unseen Path often possess additional, instinctive goals that they do not entirely understand. They might hunt certain types of creatures, violently protect a particular region, or feel the need to either help or hinder travelers based on how well the travelers follow local tradition and superstition. In other words, they behave very much like a region's fey, albeit filtered through the perceptions and the ethics of their own race, culture, and desires.

Size: It's difficult to say how big the Unseen Path might be, because it consists of dozens—if not hundreds—of smaller groups. Each group is bound together by an instinctive philosophy and frequently remains unaware that any other groups just like them exist. Any area of planar bleed with the Feywild, should it linger long enough, results in a few locals following the Unseen Path. So while any given gathering of the Unseen Path is small—anywhere from a lone individual to roughly a dozen—if all the various "pockets" of the Unseen Path were to gather in one location, there might well be hundreds of Walkers.

Alignment: The bulk of Walkers on the Unseen Path are unaligned, though good-aligned members make up a significant minority. Walkers of other alignments do exist, but they are of a wilder, more unpredictable sort. These latter Walkers are less prone to aid and protect others, and they favor staking out a territory of planar bleed to prevent anyone else from entering.

Philosophy: "Where the wilds of the world meet the borders of the Feywild, there and only there is nature most pure. Neither world is entirely whole unto itself."

Leadership: The Unseen Path has no true leaders, since it's not an organization in any formal sense. However, several Walkers have come before—men and women whose actions and equilibrium with the natural world make them worthy of respect and emulation. Perhaps two of the most renowned are Arkevia Greenleaf (female human druid/ranger hybrid), said to be descended from one of the greatest adventurers of recorded history; and Oreph Calhad (male half-elf ranger), who was born human until he reached such unity with the Feywild—while still maintaining his humanity—that he literally took on a partial fey aspect.

Membership Requirements: The Unseen Path has no formal requirements, and nobody "joins" it. Sometimes, rangers and other wilderness-based characters who hail from, or dwell within, these areas of Feywild influence develop a certain set of beliefs and attitudes, making them "members" by definition. It shows in their eyes and their demeanor, and others who share those beliefs can recognize another

"Walker" with a simple Insight check (DC equal to the observed Walker's Bluff if he or she is trying to hide an affinity for some reason; otherwise, equal to the low standard DC for a skill check of a level equal to the observed Walker).

Enemies: Most of the Unseen Path's enemies are obvious: any creatures or organizations that threaten the inhabitants of these fey-touched areas and other regions of the wild. For some Walkers, this extends to otherworldly creatures that threaten the mortal realm in general, such as aberrants or demons. But for the non-evil, less territorial Walkers, enemies also include fey who indiscriminately slaughter or torment mortals, and mortals who exploit these areas beyond their capacity to support sustainable life.

Rivals: Many primal organizations (druidic circles, shamanic tribes, and the like) are allies of, or at least sympathetic to, the Unseen Path, but a great many others think ill of these rangers. Although these organizations share a reverence for nature, the Unseen Path believes both the mortal realm and the Feywild contribute to nature's purity, while the others worship (or at least revere) primal spirits specific to the natural world alone. These groups rarely act actively hostile to the Unseen Path, though they also do not aid them in their endeavors unless they share an immediate mutual threat.

Unseen Path Lore (History or Nature DC 14)

On occasion, some rangers (and, in rare cases, other wilderness-focused characters) who were born or who operate in areas of subtle Feywild influence are affected by those phenomena in strange ways. They take on subtle fey traits—of behavior, if not physicality—and develop shared beliefs about the sanctity of the natural world, believing that nature's purest form exists where the Feywild and the world merge. Most see themselves as defenders of nature and all who try to dwell in harmony with it, so they seek to protect people from unnatural monsters and even the dangers of the wild. A few become as capricious, territorial, and even murderous as the worst of the fey themselves.

Raised in the Unseen Path

Although some rangers come to the Unseen Path when their adventuring career has already begun, others develop their abilities by sensing the faint touch of the Feywild in their mind, body, and soul before they seek adventure. Some choose never to adventure, as well. Perhaps you were born in a town very near a hidden doorway, or grew up under the watchful eye of fey who dwelt in the woods behind your family's ramshackle hut. You might even have been stolen from your crib as an infant and taken to the Feywild. In this case, you must have been retrieved swiftly—those who spend too long in the Feywild develop beliefs and attitudes other than the Unseen Path—but still, an element of the experience stayed with you even to adulthood.

You can choose to make this experience one of your character's backgrounds (see *Player's Handbook 2*). While most characters with this background are rangers who are followers of the Unseen Path, you don't have to be. You could be anyone who experienced a childhood somehow influenced by the Path.

Associated Skills: Arcana, Nature
Associated Language: Elven

These rangers call the fey-touched wilds the Unseen Path, and they dub themselves Walkers of the Unseen Path. They are not part of a formal organization, in any sense of the word. Rather, those following the Unseen Path have a collection of beliefs and attitudes that they share with those who have similar pasts. They have enough contact with each other to pass along certain traditions and historical tales, and members can identify one another. For the most part, however, the Unseen Path is a philosophy more than an order.

Unseen Path Feats

The following feats can provide rangers with some options that can assist in playing a Walker of the Unseen Path.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Bestial Mobility

Prerequisite: Beast Mastery class feature

Benefit: When you and your beast companion are adjacent to each other, you can either increase or reduce the distance of any push, pull, or slide effect on either you or your companion (but not both at once) by 2 squares. If your beast companion is adjacent to you, you can stand as a minor action.

Beast Rider

Prerequisite: Beast Mastery class feature

Benefit: If your beast companion is your size or larger, and at least Medium size, you can ride it as a mount. (This is an exception to the rule that mounts must be no smaller than Large.) You can mount or dismount your beast companion as a move action.

Fey Senses

Prerequisite: Trained in Nature

Benefit: Due to your exposure (or your ancestor's exposure) to the magic of the Feywild, you gain a +2 feat bonus to Perception and a +2 racial bonus to saving throws against charm effects.

Fey-Minded

Prerequisite: Trained in Nature

Benefit: You can use Nature in place of Arcana for fey-related monster knowledge checks. In addition, you can now speak and write Elven. (If you already know Elven, you can choose Giant or Goblin instead.)

New Ranger Powers

These techniques, developed by followers of the Unseen Path, reflect those rangers' association with the Feywild and their great sensitivity to the natural world around them. Although these are still martial exploits—they do not truly draw on arcane or primal magic—some include effects that are almost supernatural in manifestation. Many focus on either deceptive combat or on taking advantage of nature's ebb and flow to enhance an attack's accuracy, as the fey so often do.

Level 6 Utility Exploit

Harrying Hunter Stance — Ranger Utility 6

Through careful positioning and an instinctive connection, you and your companion mercilessly harry the foe.

Daily ✦ Beast, Martial
Minor Action **Personal**

Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you and your beast companion gain combat advantage against any foe to whom you are both adjacent. If you and your companion are also flanking the target, you deal 2 extra damage on Hunter's Quarry damage rolls against it.

Level 7 Encounter Exploit

Deceptive Steel — Ranger Attack 7

An off-hand attack your foe never saw coming causes disorientation as well as pain.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding two melee weapons.
Trigger: You make an opportunity attack against an enemy
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Strength vs. AC (off-hand weapon)

Hit: 2[W] (off-hand) + Strength modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, you also gain combat advantage and concealment against the target.

Level 9 Daily Exploit

Murderous Aim — Ranger Attack 9

A moment's careful study reveals to you a vast array of weak points to attack.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature designated as your quarry
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, when you deal Hunter's Quarry damage to this target, you can reroll any Hunter's Quarry damage die result of 1 or 2 until it shows a value of 3 or higher.

Level 15 Daily Exploit

Questing Blades — Ranger Attack 15

A vicious series of probes and strikes allows you to strike at your opponent's greatest vulnerabilities.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding two melee weapons.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. the lowest of the target's AC, Reflex, or Fortitude
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target is subject to your questing blades (save ends). While the target is subject to your questing blades, each time you attack the target with a power that normally targets AC, you instead attack the lowest of the target's AC, Reflex, or Fortitude.
Miss: Half damage, and until the end of your next turn, each time you attack the target with a power that normally targets AC, you instead attack the lowest of the target's AC, Reflex, or Fortitude.

Level 17 Encounter Exploit

Swooping Raptor — Ranger Attack 17

Deaths falls from above in the form of both arrow and talon.

Encounter ✦ Beast, Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon (beast 1)
Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Effect: Make a secondary attack against the target that is a melee beast 1.
Secondary Attack: Beast's attack bonus vs. AC
Hit: 1[B] + beast's Strength modifier damage.
Special: If your beast companion is a bear, a raptor, or a wolf, the beast can charge in place of the secondary attack.

Level 22 Utility Exploit

Fleet Hunter's Stance — Ranger Utility 22

You feel the flow of the earth beneath your feet, and it drives you onward and through your astonished foes.

Daily ✦ Martial, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, whenever you use a ranger power that allows you to make multiple melee attacks, you can shift 1 square after each such successful attack.

Level 25 Daily Exploit

Vengeful Fangs Stance — Ranger Attack 25

Your companion crouches, muscles tensed, ready to strike at all that threatens you.

Daily ✦ Beast, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, your beast companion can score a critical hit on a roll of 18-20, and it gains a power bonus to damage rolls equal to your Strength modifier or Dexterity modifier. As an opportunity action when an enemy hits you with an attack, you can command your beast companion to make a melee basic attack or a charge attack against that enemy. The beast does not provoke opportunity attacks if it charges during this action. Your beast companion gains combat advantage on this attack if the target is also your quarry.

About the Author

Ari Marmell was born in New York, moved to Houston when he was a year old, moved to Austin when he was 27, but has spent most of his life living in other worlds through a combination of writing and roleplaying games. He has been writing more or less constantly for the last dozen years, though he has only been paid for it the past five. He is the author of multiple roleplaying game supplements including work on Dungeons & Dragons®. Ari lives in Austin with his wife George and two cats.

Class Acts: The Ruthless Reach Barbarian

By Aeryn "Blackdirge" Rudel
Illustration by Tyler Walpole

Barbarians favor two-handed weapons because these weapons allow their wielders to use more leverage, a concept that translates into heavier, more damaging blows. One type of barbarian, the ruthless reach barbarian, has mastered the use of two-handed reach weapons, which apply leverage with each strike like no other type of weapons. The long haft of a glaive, halberd, or longspear allows a ruthless reach barbarian to generate immense power when targeting foes at his or her weapon's maximum reach—in other words, 2 squares away. The barbarian evocations presented here take this into account, and a ruthless reach barbarian is doubly dangerous when he or she has a little room to work.

Although still a striker through and through, a ruthless reach barbarian can act as controller in a secondary role by attacking small groups of foes or moving enemies around the battlefield. He or she can even serve as a defender in a pinch, using reach to keep enemies at bay or cutting weaker foes down before they can enter melee range.

Level 1 At-Will Evocation

Savage Reach — **Barbarian Attack 1**

Your great strength and the reach of your weapon allow you to smash enemies aside with each blow.

At-Will ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a two-handed reach weapon.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC.
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you slide the target 1 square. If you are raging, you can slide the target 2 squares.
Level 21: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage.

Level 1 Encounter Evocation

Room for Carnage — **Barbarian Attack 1**

You drive your foes backward with the haft of your weapon, giving you enough room to deliver a mighty blow.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a two-handed reach weapon.
Effect: You push each enemy adjacent to you 1 square.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage

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Level 3 Encounter Evocation

Longstrike Charge — Barbarian Attack 3

You surge toward your target, your momentum and the length of your weapon adding devastating speed and power to your attack.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a two-handed reach weapon.
Special: When charging, you can use this power in place of a melee basic attack. When you do so, you gain a bonus to the damage roll equal to the number of squares you moved during the charge.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage.

Level 5 Daily Evocation

Longstrike Slayer Rage — Barbarian Attack 5

Your weapon smashes into your targets like a steel hurricane as your fury enhances its leverage and power with each strike.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Requirement: You must be wielding a two-handed reach weapon.
Target: Each enemy you can see and is not adjacent to you in burst
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier + Constitution modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of the longstrike slayer. Until the rage ends, you gain a power bonus equal to your Constitution modifier to melee and close weapon damage rolls against targets that are 2 or more squares away from you.

Level 7 Encounter Evocation

Devastating Leverage — Barbarian Attack 7

You swing your weapon in a wide arc, using the terrible power generated by its length to smash your enemy to the ground.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a two-handed reach weapon.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you slide the target 1 square and knock the target prone.

Level 13 Encounter Evocation

Shattering Reach — Barbarian Attack 13

The long haft of your weapon allows you to strike with enough force to shatter armor and shields like brittle glass.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a two-handed reach weapon.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target takes a penalty to AC equal to your Constitution modifier until the end of your next turn.

Level 15 Daily Evocation

Slashing Tornado Rage — Barbarian Attack 15

The howling winds of the tornado enhance your whirling strike. As the fury of the tornado fills you, your fury reaches out to strike at any who oppose you.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Requirement: You must be wielding a two-handed reach weapon.
Target: Each enemy you can see in burst
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of the slashing tornado. Until the rage ends, at the start of each of your turns, deal damage equal to your Constitution modifier to each enemy within 2 squares of you.

Level 16 Utility Evocation

Rampant Reach — Barbarian Utility 16

No one can escape the reach of your rage.

Encounter ✦ Primal
Free Action **Personal**
Requirement: You must be wielding a two-handed reach weapon.
Trigger: You score a critical hit with a barbarian attack power
Effect: You have threatening reach with the weapon used in the triggering attack until the end of your next turn. You also gain a bonus to damage rolls with opportunity attacks equal to 3 + your Constitution modifier until the end of your next turn.

Level 23 Encounter Evocation

Mammoth Leverage — **Barbarian Attack 23**

Focusing all of your strength and the terrible power generated by your weapon into one monumental blow, you smash your enemy clear across the battlefield.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be using a two-handed reach weapon.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC.
Hit: 4[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you slide the target 2 squares and knock it prone.

Barbarian Feats

The following feats are designed to help a ruthless reach barbarian make the most of his or her two-handed reach weapon.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Brutal Reach

Prerequisite: Barbarian

Benefit: When you are raging and wielding a two-handed reach weapon, you can reroll any weapon damage die that displays a 1 when making melee attacks.

Raging Reach

Prerequisite: Barbarian, *rage strike*

Benefit: When wielding a two-handed reach weapon, you deal extra damage equal to your Constitution modifier with *rage strike* against targets that are 2 or more squares away from you.

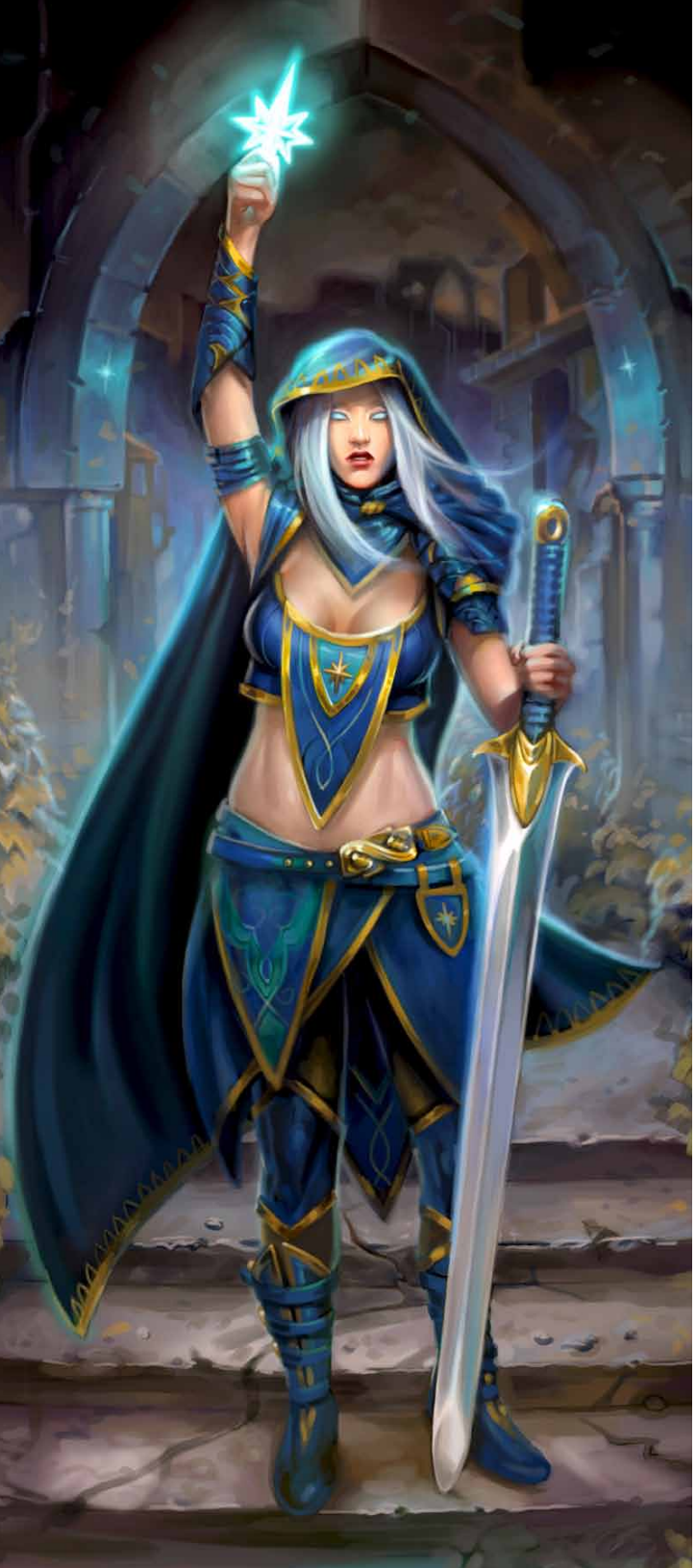
Ruthless Rampage

Prerequisite: Barbarian, Rampage class feature

Benefit: When you make a free melee basic attack with a two-handed reach weapon as a result of Rampage, you gain a +2 bonus to the damage roll if the target is 2 or more squares away from you.

About the Author

Aeryn "Blackdirge" Rudel is a staff writer and editor for Goodman Games, a freelance writer and RPG designer, and the editor-in-chief of the 4E magazine *Level Up*. He has been a professional game designer since 2005, and his recent author credits include *Blackdirge's Dungeon Denizens*, *Critter Cache: Daemons*, and *Hero's Handbook: Tiefling*. Aeryn currently lives in Modesto, California with his wife Melissa, a nongamer whose tolerance for her husband's geekery borders on the supernatural.



Class Acts: Avenger

Vengeful Traditions

By Robert J. Schwalb

Illustration by Cynthia Sheppard

Avengers share the same gods as other divine servants, but their methods vary. For the avenger, only war matters. Conflict rules the avenger's thoughts. Their purpose and training dictates that they meet their god's enemies with overwhelming violence. They seek only to shatter those foes that would tear down the god's works and threaten its dominion. Other divine characters might use other stratagems to deal with their foes, but where they can sometimes be scalpels, the avenger is always the hammer.

Given the avengers' destructive bent, they find themselves at odds with others in the same faith, and, without a doubt, they cross paths and swords with rivals. Some faiths have even gone so far as to name avengers heretics, extremists, and deviants who twist a god's message to serve bloodthirsty agendas. For this reason, avengers learn their techniques in secluded monasteries. In these sacred halls, they undergo punishing training until they prove themselves worthy to undertake the holy mission assigned to them. Attrition is high and often fatal, so only the most fervent followers ever complete their training to become avengers in truth.

Monastic [Background]

The monastery defined your early life. You might have trained in a secluded temple, hidden high in the mountains as Moradin's and Kord's often are. Or perhaps your home was tucked away in a city, concealed by powerful wards so it blends in, unseen, such as Erathis's monasteries sometimes are. How did you come to this monastery? What was life like for you? In what ways did you excel in your training? In what ways did you fall short?

Avandra Associated Skills: Dungeoneering, Nature

Bahamut Associated Skills: Insight, Intimidate

Corellon Associated Skills: Arcana, Insight

Erathis Associated Skills: Diplomacy, Streetwise

Ioun Associated Skills: History, Insight

Kord Associated Skills: Athletics, Endurance

Melora Associated Skills: Nature, Perception

Moradin Associated Skills: Endurance, History

Pelor Associated Skills: Diplomacy, Heal

The Raven Queen Associated Skills: Intimidate, Religion

Sehanine Associated Skills: Perception, Stealth

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Godsworn Nemesis

"Liberation is my sword, freedom my shield. Tyrants shall tremble, oppressors will quake, because no chains can withstand my fury and no law can deny my wrath."

The avenger lives to destroy his or her gods' enemies and represents the divine interests in the world by the weapons each wields. While the training's principles are never far from the avenger's thoughts, the degree to which an avenger pursues them varies from individual to individual. Some avengers see their training and doctrines as tools they can use to overcome the challenges they face, while others find they cannot see beyond the strictures and find their lives defined by the war the wage. These zealots are the godsworn nemeses, and they represent some of the most ferocious and single-minded warriors known in the world and beyond.

Godsworn Alacrity

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Avandra

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, you gain a +2 feat bonus to speed until the end of your next turn as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Assault

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Erathis

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, one ally you can see gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls until the end of your next turn as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Avalanche

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Kord

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, you can also push the target a number of squares equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Bulwark

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Moradin

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, you gain a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of your next turn as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Defender

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Bahamut

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, one ally you can see gains a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of your next turn as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Fatalist

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, your target takes extra necrotic or cold damage equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Mentalist

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Ioun

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, the critical hit deals extra psychic damage equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Mystic

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Sehanine

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, you gain concealment until the end of your next turn as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Radiant

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Pelor

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, your target takes extra radiant damage equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Sidestep

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Corellon

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, you can teleport 5 squares to any unoccupied square adjacent to your *oath of enmity* target as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Tidedancer

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Melora

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Religion checks. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit, you can shift a number of squares equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier as a godsworn boon. You can benefit from only one godsworn boon as a result of any given critical hit.

Godsworn Encounter Powers at Higher Levels

If you're not so keen on taking one of these encounter powers at 3rd level, they're all easily upgraded to the paragon or epic tiers.

For the paragon tier, add 1d10 to the heroic-tier power's damage (for a total of 3d10 + Wisdom modifier). This makes it a level 13 power.

For the epic tier, add 2d10 to the heroic-tier power's damage (for a total of 4d10 + Wisdom modifier). This makes it a level 23 power.

Avenger Powers

Avengers who become godsworn nemeses are granted the opportunity to focus the divine wrath of their specific deities.

Encounter Attack Powers

Alacritous Assault — Avenger Attack 3

The fury of your god's presence sweeps through your allies as well, causing them to gain better battlefield position.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Alacrity
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: Each ally adjacent to you can shift 1 square as a free action.

Chill of Winter's Bite — Avenger Attack 3

Even as your foe falters momentarily from the power of your attack, an ally receives the blessing of your deity on his or her next attack.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Necrotic, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Fatalist
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant or necrotic damage.
Effect: One ally you can see deals extra necrotic damage equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier on his or her next melee attack against the target before the end of your next turn.

Enlightened Strike — Avenger Attack 3

The power of your deity damages foe, and then flows into an ally, who then uses it to make surer attacks.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Assault
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: One ally you can see gains a +1 power bonus to attack rolls until the start of your next turn.

Lunar Strike — Avenger Attack 3

The grace of your deity provides your foe with blessed pain while giving an ally a chance to disappear from sight.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Illusion, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Mystic
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: One ally you can see becomes invisible until the start of your next turn or until he or she hits or misses.

Mind-Rending Assault — Avenger Attack 3

The pain of your attack is not contained within your chosen foe; it resonates within an ally's foe with each strike your ally makes.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Psychic, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Mentalist
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier psychic or radiant damage.
Effect: One ally you can see deals extra psychic damage equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier on his or her next melee attack against the target before the end of your next turn.

Seal of Scales — Avenger Attack 3

Your god's full fury not only smites your foe but also grants an ally additional protection.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Defender
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: One ally you can see gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the start of your next turn.

Strike of the Forgehammer — Avenger Attack 3

As your foe takes damage from your attack, your deity's power flows through an ally and bolsters him or her against deleterious effects.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Bulwark
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: One ally can make a saving throw with a +2 power bonus.

Strike from the Mountaintop — Avenger Attack 3

The fury of your deity finds an outlet in both your attack and that of an ally's, making both enemies feel as if Kord pounded them into the ground.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Avalanche
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: One ally you can see gains a +2 power bonus to damage rolls until the start of your next turn.

Strike of Perfect Beauty — Avenger Attack 3

As you attack your foe, divine energy flows from you to an ally, enabling him or her to also bring divine retribution upon an enemy.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Force, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Sidestep
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant or force damage.
Effect: One ally you can see deals extra force damage equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier on his or her next melee attack against the target before the end of your next turn.

Sun of the Heavens Strike — Avenger Attack 3

Even as divine power flows from your attack into your foe, your ally receives a measure of it for an attack of his or her own.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Radiant
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: One ally you can see deals extra radiant damage equal to your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier on his or her next melee attack against the target before the end of your next turn.

Tidal Shift — Avenger Attack 3

Not only does your deity's power fall upon your foe as you attack it, but it also moves an ally into a position to engage your chosen enemy.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Tidedancer
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: You slide one ally you can see 5 squares to a square adjacent to the target.

Utility Powers

Breath of Creation — Avenger Utility 6

Moradin breathes new life into you to help your injuries heal and make good on the oath you swore.

Daily ✦ Divine, Healing
Minor Action **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Bulwark
Effect: You regain hit points equal to your healing surge value.

Freedom Step — Avenger Utility 6

You blur into motion, moving faster than the eye can follow.

Encounter ✦ Divine
Move Action **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Alacrity
Effect: If you are slowed, immobilized, or restrained, the condition ends. You shift a number of squares equal to your speed.

Implacable Mountain — Avenger Utility 6

Your faith in the Battle Lord gives you the strength you need to shrug off your enemy's attacks.

Encounter ✦ Divine
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Avalanche
Trigger: You are dazed, stunned, or weakened by an attack
Effect: Make a saving throw. If the saving throw succeeds, you end the triggering effect.

Light of Civilization — Avenger Utility 6

A common enemy can restore a community's bonds, and your successful attack helps an ally to share your purpose

Encounter ✦ Divine, Radiant
Free Action **Close** burst 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Assault
Trigger: You hit your *oath of enmity* target with a melee attack
Target: One ally in burst
Effect: The target gains a +2 power bonus to its next attack roll against the target before the end of your next turn. If that attack hits, it deals an extra 5 radiant damage.

Pelor's Shining Light — Avenger Utility 6

None can hide from Pelor's shining light.

Daily ✦ Divine, Zone
Minor Action **Close** blast 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Radiant
Effect: The blast creates a zone of bright light that lasts until the end of the encounter. Creatures do not benefit from concealment or total concealment while within the zone.

Platinum Pride — Avenger Utility 6

When a treacherous foe would strike you, the Platinum Dragon's shielding wing is there to protect you from harm.

Daily ✦ Divine, Stance
Standard Action **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Defender
Effect: Until the stance ends, you gain a +2 power bonus to all defenses against attacks from enemies that aren't your *oath of enmity* targets.

Prescient Knowledge — Avenger Utility 6

You perceive danger before it materializes and react accordingly.

Encounter ✦ Divine
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Mentalist
Trigger: An enemy that is not your *oath of enmity* target hits you with an attack
Effect: You gain a +4 power bonus to all defenses against the triggering attack.

Shroud of Winter — Avenger Utility 6

Your aspect changes to assume a skeletal appearance cloaked in shadow.

Encounter ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Fatalist
Effect: You gain concealment and become insubstantial until the end of your next turn.

Symmetric Harmony — Avenger Utility 6

Your perfect strike invites Corellon's blessing upon you.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Teleportation
Free Action **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Sidestep
Trigger: You make a melee attack against your *oath of enmity* target and roll the same number on each die of the attack roll
Effect: If the attack hits and deals damage, it deals 5 extra force or radiant damage. If the attack misses, you can teleport to any unoccupied square adjacent to the target.

Veil of the Moon — Avenger Utility 6

The air shimmers as if the sun set upon your shoulders. In a flash, you are gone.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Illusion
Minor Action **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Mystic
Effect: You become invisible until the end of your next turn or until you hit or miss.

Wrath of the Sea — Avenger Utility 6

Your pain awakens nature's fury within you, giving you the spirit to see the battle through to its conclusion.

Daily ✦ Divine, Stance
Immediate Reaction **Personal**
Prerequisite: Godsworn Tidedancer
Trigger: You are bloodied by an attack
Effect: Until the stance ends, your avenger encounter and daily attack powers deal extra damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Daily Attack Powers

Avandra's Footsteps — Avenger Attack 9

Filled with righteous indignation, your attack damages your foe and lends swiftness to your movement.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Alacrity
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You gain a +3 power bonus to speed until the end of the encounter.

Bahamut's Wing — Avenger Attack 9

The power of your god wounds your enemy and bolsters your allies' defenses.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Defender
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, whenever you hit your *oath of enmity* target with an avenger encounter attack power, each ally that can see you gains a +1 power bonus to all defenses until the start of your next turn.

Corellon's Evasion — Avenger Attack 9

Corellon graces you with the ability to move around the field of combat quickly after you hit your foe.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Teleportation
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Sidestep
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, whenever you hit your *oath of enmity* target with an avenger encounter attack power, you can teleport 3 squares.

Erathis's Coordination — Avenger Attack 9

The divine power of your deity damages your foe and makes it easier for others to strike your chosen enemy.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Assault
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, whenever you hit your *oath of enmity* target with an avenger encounter attack power, one ally you can see gains a +2 power bonus to attack rolls against your target until the start of your next turn.

Ioun's Irrefutable Logic — Avenger Attack 9

The power of Ioun resonates within the mind of your foe, causing it to quiver with pain.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Mentalist
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, your avenger encounter attack powers deal 3 extra psychic damage against your *oath of enmity* target. Increase the extra damage to 6 at 19th level, and 9 at 29th level.

Kord's Storm — Avenger Attack 9

The thunderous might of Kord flows through you and into your foe with each successful attack you make.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Lightning, Thunder
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Avalanche
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, your avenger encounter attack powers deal 3 extra lightning and thunder damage against your *oath of enmity* target. Increase the extra damage to 6 at 19th level, and 9 at 29th level.

Melora's Inexorable Tide — Avenger Attack 9

The power of Melora accompanies your attack, causing a nearby enemy pain.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Tidedancer
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, whenever you hit your *oath of enmity* target with an avenger encounter attack power, one other enemy adjacent to you takes radiant damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Moradin's Stalwart Shield — Avenger Attack 9

The strength of Moradin not only wounds your foe but also provides you with inner resources to protect you from damage.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Bulwark
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, whenever you hit your *oath of enmity* target with an avenger encounter attack power, you gain resistance to damage equal to your Wisdom modifier until the start of your next turn.

Pelor's Divine Fire — Avenger Attack 9

The light of Pelor fills you and wounds your enemy.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Radiant
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, your avenger encounter attack powers deal 3 extra radiant damage against your *oath of enmity* target. Increase the extra damage to 6 at 19th level, and 9 at 29th level.

The Raven Queen's Decay — Avenger Attack 9

Your deity's power finds a place within the body of your foe, causing it bone-deep pain.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Necrotic
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Fatalist
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, your avenger encounter attack powers deal 3 extra necrotic damage against your *oath of enmity* target. Increase the extra damage to 6 at 19th level, and 9 at 29th level.

Sehanine's Misdirection — Avenger Attack 9

Sehanine provides you with the power to dance in and out of sight of your foe when you wound it.

Daily ✦ Divine, Illusion, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Prerequisite: Godsworn Mystic
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d12 + Wisdom modifier damage, and you pull the target 4 squares to a square adjacent to you.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, whenever you hit your *oath of enmity* target with an avenger encounter attack power, you become invisible until the start of your next turn.

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose more recent work can be found in *Martial Power™ 2*, *Draconomicon™ 2*, and *Primal Power™*. Robert lives in Tennessee.

Godsworn Daily Powers at Higher Levels

If you're not so keen on taking one of these daily powers at 9th level, they're all easily upgraded to the paragon or epic tiers.

For the paragon tier, add 2d12 to the heroic-tier power's damage (for a total of 4d12 + Wisdom modifier). This makes it a level 19 power.

For the epic tier, add 3d12 to the heroic-tier power's damage (for a total of 5d12 + Wisdom modifier). This makes it a level 29 power.

Class Acts: Cleric

By Matt James ✦ Illustration by Cynthia Sheppard

Battle-priests of war require twice the training, determination, and grit of any conventional soldier.

The lord of battle, Kord, is a stalwart and brave warrior-god who seeks victory even in the clutches of defeat. His loyal followers train for countless hours to be the best on any terrain and against any enemy; they must be prepared to sacrifice all in the name of competition and victory.

A smaller gathering of his followers is more zealous than the rest and takes great pride in bringing defeat to even the most skilled of opposition. This group, called the Covenant of War, is both feared and respected, and it often finds victory at the quivering surrender of their foes before the battle has even begun. They train at all hours of the day, utilizing every last drop of sunlight to perfect their deadly maneuvers and to seek divine guidance from their patron. Less concerned with the traditional teachings of divine magic, these battle priests utilize the power of their deity to deliver devastating attacks on their unfortunate foes.

The organization consists of a military-type hierarchy that emphasizes merit and accomplishment over hard talk and empty promises. It includes members of other classes as well, such as paladins, avengers, fighters, bards, and rogues. Only one rule exists within this organization: Come with all you have or do not come at all. They do not accept anything less, and they uphold standards of strength and ability at all costs.

Clerics who wish to learn more of the battlelord's Covenant of War are encouraged to seek out sacred temples located throughout the known world. Within each one resides a secret gladiatorial testing ground where only the strong survive. Failure in these gladiatorial contests means permanent expulsion from the Covenant's place of worship and denial at any attempt for readmission.

Level 1 Daily Prayer

Inflict Light Wounds — **Cleric Attack 1**

Calling upon the wrath of your deity, you wrack your enemy with pain.

Daily ✦ Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is weakened until the end of your next turn.

Level 2 Utility Prayer

Sacrificial Aegis — **Cleric Utility 2**

The power of your faith siphons life out of you and bolsters your ally with divine protection.

Daily ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Target: One ally
Effect: You take damage equal to your surge value. This damage cannot be reduced by any means. The target gains temporary hit points equal to twice that value.

Level 5 Daily Prayer

Augment of War — **Cleric Attack 5**

Your deity answers your call and assaults your foe with divine energy.

Daily ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Target: One ally's weapon
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, all attacks made with this weapon deal extra damage equal to your Strength modifier. When the weapon hits an enemy, that enemy grants combat advantage until the start of the wielder's next turn.

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Level 9 Daily Prayer

Divine Surge — Cleric Attack 9

Calling upon the strength of your deity, you send waves of divine power through your foe, distracting it momentarily.

Daily ✦ Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each enemy in burst you can see
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target grants combat advantage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and target grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Level 10 Utility Prayer

Transcendent Advisor — Cleric Utility 10

A servant of your deity appears before you.

Daily ✦ Conjuration, Divine
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Effect: You conjure an advisor from your deity that appears in an unoccupied square within range. The advisor occupies 1 square and lasts until the end of your next turn. Allies within 5 squares of the counsel can roll twice on all knowledge checks and keep either result.
Sustain Minor: The effect persists.

Level 13 Encounter Prayer

Invocation of War — Cleric Attack 13

The wounds you create embolden your allies to achieve greatness.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier, and the next attack that hits the target before the end of your next turn deals extra damage equal to your Strength modifier, or Strength + Wisdom modifier if you are wielding a two-handed weapon.

Level 16 Utility Prayer

Eternal Barrier — Cleric Utility 16

Your divine presence removes obstacles in your way.

At-Will ✦ Conjuration, Divine, Zone
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Effect: The burst creates a zone centered on you that lasts until the end of your next turn. While within the zone, you and each ally ignore difficult terrain.
Sustain Minor: The zone persists.

Level 19 Daily Prayer

Greater Augment of War — Cleric Attack 19

The power of your deity flows through an ally's weapon and creates lethargy within any foe the weapon strikes.

Daily ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Target: One ally's weapon
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, all attacks made with this weapon deal extra damage equal to 5 + your Strength modifier. When the weapon hits an enemy, that enemy is slowed and grants combat advantage to you until the start of the wielder's next turn.

Level 25 Daily Prayer

Divine Reaping — Cleric Attack 25

The power of your deity works its way through each foe you strike, causing it to slacken and falter.

Daily ✦ Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each enemy you can see in burst
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is weakened until the end of your next turn.

Level 27 Encounter Prayer

Brutal Grace — Cleric Attack 27

As you strike with your weapon, your deity sends forth a decree that resonates across the battlefield and aids your allies.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Strength modifier damage, and each ally within 5 squares of you can make a saving throw against one effect that a save can end.

New Magic Weapon

Blood Maul — Level 7+

This maul's dark red stains never seem to wash off.

Lvl 7	+2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22	+5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12	+3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27	+6	1,625,000 gp
Lvl 17	+4	65,000 gp			

Weapon: Mace, hammer
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 per plus, or +1d10 per plus against bloodied enemies
Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* You bloody an enemy with an attack that is not a critical hit with this weapon. *Effect:* You deal extra damage to the target equal to your bonus critical damage with this weapon.

About the Author

Matt James is a disabled combat veteran, having earned a Bronze Star and Purple Heart from his recent service in the United States Army. When not freelance writing for Dungeons & Dragons®, he works on developing his website (http://www.loremaster.org). Follow Matt online at www.twitter.com/matt_james_fr.

Class Acts: Warlord

By Robert J. Schwalb
Illustration by Chad King

Keys to the Battlefield

"Look friend, we ain't got no fancy spells and there ain't no gods lookin' out fer the likes of you and me. We got these weapons, but we got something more too. We got each other. You get my back and I swear on my father's beard I'll get yours."

—Borst, dwarf warlord

Martial characters might engage the enemy in wildly different ways. Some rely on shadows to skulk about and plant their daggers where least expected, and others fling themselves headlong into the enemies' teeth. However, what unites them all is an uncommon understanding of battlefield tactics. Such characters don't have grimoires dripping with complex arcane formulas or a god's hand resting on their shoulder, but what they do have is grit, discipline, and cold, hard steel.

No one knows this better than the warlord. Trained in a variety of fighting techniques tested on countless battlefields through history's long march, warlords draw from their vast experience to find unexpected solutions to the thorniest problems. This said, warlords approach battlefield tactics from several different angles. One might hang back to pepper the enemy with arrows, while another leaps to the front, guiding allies' attacks through inspiring advice, tactical acumen, or sheer bravado. These approaches affect how a warlord leads and they shed light on the methods that warlord might use to defeat the enemy.

Although individual interests vary a great deal (often reflected in the warlord's build and power selection), even the most reckless warlord knows when to check his or her impulse and gauge the battlefield and the happenings unfolding there. Such a warlord ought to adjust his or her tactics to plug holes and respond to the changing tide, all to ensure his or her companions can see the battle to its conclusion. A clever warlord, however, anticipates how a battle develops and uses his or her allies to meet these changing conditions.

New Warlord Powers

The following warlord powers speak to the warlord's dynamic approach to combat, reflecting an awareness about his or her allies' capabilities, their strengths, and their weaknesses. These powers are intended for warlords from any build to expand their arsenal to better meet the battlefield's myriad dangers.

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Level 1 Encounter Exploit

Tactician's Invitation — Warlord Attack 1

Your strike leaves the opponent swaying so that a feather's touch can cause it to move from its position.

Encounter ✧ **Martial, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** or **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage. The next time an ally hits the target before the end of your next turn, that ally can slide the target 2 squares, shift 2 squares, or deal 4 extra damage to the target.

Level 1 Daily Exploit

Destructive Surprise — Warlord Attack 1

You motivate an ally to strike true at just the right moment.

Daily ✧ **Martial, Weapon**
Standard Action **Close** burst 10
Target: One ally in burst
Effect: The target can make the following attack.
Free Action **Melee** or **Ranged** weapon
Effect: The ally shifts 2 squares.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Dexterity modifier vs. Reflex
Hit: 3[W] + Strength or Dexterity modifier.
Miss: Half damage.

Level 2 Utility Exploit

Martial Cascade — Warlord Utility 2

Your daring attack inspires an ally to follow your lead.

Encounter ✧ **Martial**
Free Action **Close** burst 10
Trigger: An enemy is hit by your attack
Target: Each ally in burst who can see you
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, any target who spends an action point to make an attack against the triggering enemy gains a +2 power bonus to the attack roll.

Level 3 Encounter Exploits

Interrupting Strike — Warlord Attack 3

Your weapon strikes the foe and, if it seeks to attack another, your waiting ally can attempt an attack of his or her own first.

Encounter ✧ **Martial, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you mark the target until the end of your next turn. If the target makes an attack before the end of your next turn that does not include you as a target, one ally adjacent to the target can make a basic attack against it as an immediate interrupt. If the ally's attack hits, the target takes a -2 penalty to the attack roll.

Martial Doom — Warlord Attack 3

Your attack connects to expose an opening that any ally with will or daring can seize.

Encounter ✧ **Martial, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** or **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target grants combat advantage to your allies until the end of your next turn.
Effect: Any ally that hits the target with an attack gained from spending an action point before the end of your next turn deals 5 extra damage to the target.

Level 5 Daily Exploit

Surging Assault — Warlord Attack 5

Your powerful strike gives an ally the means to recover from his or her injuries and rejoin the battle.

Daily ✧ **Martial, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Each ally adjacent to you or the target can use his or her second wind as a free action.

Level 6 Utility Exploits

Back to Back — Warlord Utility 6

You take heart from the ally guarding your back.

Daily ✧ **Martial, Stance**
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You assume the back to back stance. Until the stance ends, while you are adjacent to an ally, you and the ally gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls.

Martial Vigor — Warlord Utility 6

When your attack connects, you experience a burst of confidence your allies can share if they follow your lead.

Encounter ✧ **Healing, Martial**
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You hit an enemy with a martial melee or ranged attack
Effect: You can spend a healing surge. Until the start of your next turn, any ally that hits the same target with an attack gained from spending an action point can also spend a healing surge.

Level 7 Encounter Exploits

Martial Excitation — Warlord Attack 7

Your attack's success fills your allies with the urge to push further and fight harder.

Encounter ✕ **Martial, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** or **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you can shift a number of squares equal to one-half your speed.
Effect: Until the start of your next turn, whenever an ally that can see you spends an action point, he or she can shift up to one-half his or her speed as a free action before or after the extra action.

Tactician's Favor — Warlord Attack 7

Your blow causes an ally's follow-up strike to cement his or her tactical advantage.

Encounter ✕ **Martial, Weapon**
Standard Action **Melee** or **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage. The next time an ally hits the target before the end of your next turn, he or she gains one of the following benefits until the end of his or her next turn: +2 power bonus to all defenses, a +1 power bonus to attack rolls, or a +3 power bonus to damage rolls.

Level 9 Daily Exploit

Coordinated Assault — Warlord Attack 9

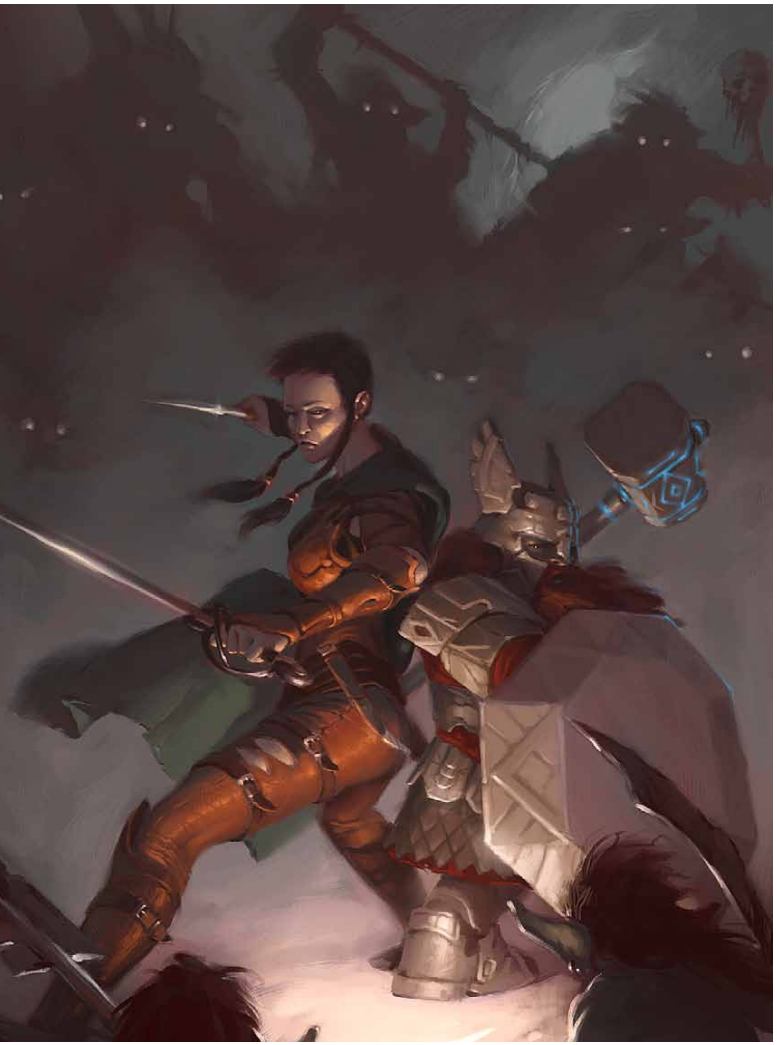
By coordinating your efforts, your allies deliver two devastating attacks.

Daily ✕ **Martial, Weapon**
Standard Action **Close** burst 10
Target: One or two allies in burst
Effect: The target can make the following attack. Each target must attack a different creature.
Free Action **Melee** or **Ranged** weapon
Effect: The target ally can shift 3 squares.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Dexterity modifier vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength or Dexterity modifier damage, and the target falls prone.

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose more recent work is in *Martial Power™ 2*, *Draconomicon™ 2*, and *Primal Power*. Robert lives in Tennessee.

Class Acts:
The Commando Warlord



By Robert J. Schwalb ✦ Illustration by Chad King

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Many warlords favor a direct approach in battle, fighting from the vanguard as they lead the charge to smash through enemy ranks. Although warlords might approach these aggressive methods from various directions—with some favoring skirmishing and others preferring reckless bravado—their results are often the same. The commando warlord, however, outwits and outmaneuvers his or her enemies by laying traps and springing ambushes to catch foes unaware.

A commando warlord is an irregular soldier, being fast on his or her feet and relying on guile and cunning to defeat the enemy. A commando warlord finds much success on the front lines, but not through direct attacks, but rather by shouting commands to allies to seize openings he or she creates. A commando warlord is a team-player and benefits most from working with defenders and strikers.

Level 1 Encounter Exploit

Overwhelming Force Trap — Warlord Attack 1

You keep the order to spring the trap ready, allowing your allies to spring into action on a moment's notice.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Interrupt **Close** burst 3
Trigger: An ally in the burst makes a melee basic attack
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: The target uses one of his or her melee at-will attack powers instead of making a melee basic attack. If the attack hits, the subject of the target's attack is also dazed until the end of the target's next turn.

Level 1 Daily Exploit

Orchestrated Offensive — Warlord Attack 1

Your strike is the only signal your allies need to put your careful plan into motion.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Effect: Choose two different allies within 5 squares of you that can see and hear you. Each ally can make a charge attack, make a basic attack, or shift his or her speed as a free action. Allies that choose to charge or make basic attacks cannot attack the same creature or the target of this attack.

Level 2 Utility Exploit

Cunning Adjustment — Warlord Utility 2

Your strike creates an opening your ally seizes to his or her advantage.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You hit an enemy with a melee attack.
Target: One ally adjacent to you
Effect: The target shifts 3 squares as a free action and gains combat advantage against the triggering enemy until the end of your next turn.

Level 3 Encounter Exploit

Set the Trap — Warlord Attack 3

You grab the enemy's attention with an aggressive strike to give your allies a chance to set up their own attacks.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Effect: One ally you can see can shift half his or her speed as a free action to a square where it has cover or concealment and make a Stealth check to become hidden. Before the end of your next turn, that ally gains a +3 power bonus to his or her next damage roll made against an enemy from which he or she is hidden.

Level 5 Daily Exploit

Directed Combat — Warlord Attack 5

Your strike creates the opening an ally needs to slip away, while another ally rushes in to keep the foe pinned down.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Effect: One ally adjacent to the target shifts his or her speed as a free action. Then, choose a different ally within 5 squares of you that can see and hear you. That ally makes a charge attack against the target.

Level 6 Utility Exploit

Get Down! — Warlord Utility 6

Your barked order draws attention to you long enough for a covered or concealed ally to hide.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Minor Action **Close** burst 5
Target: One ally in the burst
Effect: The target can shift half his or her speed as a free action to a square where he or she has cover or concealment and make a Stealth check with a +5 power bonus to become hidden.

Level 7 Encounter Exploit

Friendly Fire — Warlord Attack 7

Such is your presence that you panic an enemy into accidentally hitting one of its allies.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 10
Trigger: An enemy misses you or an ally you can see with a melee or ranged attack.
Target: The triggering enemy
Effect: The target repeats the attack as a free action against a creature you choose within 2 squares of the target of its original attack. The new target must still be legal for the attack.

Level 9 Daily Exploit

Shift the Field — Warlord Attack 9

Swinging your weapon calls your allies to strike. If the plan works, you all adjust your positions to respond the battlefield's new developments.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Choose two allies within 5 squares of you that can both see and hear you. Each ally makes a basic attack as a free action against different creatures that are not the targets of this attack.

Level 10 Utility Exploit

Judicious Action — Warlord Utility 10

An ally's efforts are renewed against those you oppose.

Daily ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 5
Trigger: An ally in the burst misses all targets with an attack when using an action gained by spending an action point
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: The target gains 1 action point. Spending this action point does not count against the limits on action point expenditures for this encounter. If the target does not spend the action point before the end of the encounter, it is lost.

Level 13 Encounter Exploit

Blade Burst Trap — Warlord Attack 13

Your careful preparations unleash a devastating trap, but you are experienced enough to let them go should your situation change.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 5
Trigger: An enemy in the burst hits you or an ally with an attack.
Target: One ally adjacent to triggering enemy
Effect: The target makes a melee basic attack as a free action against each enemy adjacent to him or her. If the attack hits, the enemy is also dazed until the end of the target's next turn.

Level 15 Daily Exploit

Call to Action — Warlord Attack 15

A shouted command calls your allies to act, helping them to find new reserves or driving them to strike your enemies down.

Daily ✦ Healing, Martial
Standard Action **Close** burst 10
Target: One, two, or three targets that can hear you in burst
Effect: Each target can choose to spend a healing surge, make a basic attack, or make a charge attack as a free action. Each ally that makes an attack as a result of this effect must choose a different target and deals 1d10 extra damage on a hit.

Level 16 Utility Exploit

Pincer Formation — Warlord Utility 16

Reading your enemy's intent, you increase the pressure so it cannot escape your grasp.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 5
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to you moves or shifts
Target: You and one ally in the burst adjacent to the triggering enemy
Effect: The target shifts his or her speed and must end this shift in a square adjacent to the triggering enemy.

Level 17 Encounter Exploit

Vanishing Forces — Warlord Attack 17

An aggressive attack draws attention away from your allies so they can move into position while remaining unseen.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target is marked by you until the end of your next turn.
Effect: Each ally within 5 squares of you that you can see shifts his or her speed as a free action to a square with cover or concealment and makes a Stealth check to become hidden. Before the end of your next turn, each of those allies gains a +5 power bonus to its next damage roll made against an enemy from which it is hidden.

Level 19 Daily Exploit

War Dance — Warlord Attack 19

One attack from you sees each ally moving into planned positions and striking with speed and force.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Each ally that can see and hear you within 5 squares of you can shift his or her speed as a free action. Each of these allies gains 10 temporary hit points the first time he or she hits with an attack made before the end of your next turn.

Level 22 Utility Exploit

Sound the Retreat — Warlord Utility 22

When your doom casts its shadow upon you, you sound the retreat, compelling your allies to quit the battlefield.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 10
Trigger: You are bloodied by an attack
Target: You and each ally in burst
Effect: The target shifts a number of squares as a free action equal to his or her speed.

Level 23 Encounter Exploit

Critical Misfire — Warlord Attack 23

When your enemies are victims of friendly fire, they experience a critical failure in their battle plan.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 10
Trigger: An enemy misses you or an ally you can see with a melee or ranged attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Effect: The target repeats the attack as a free action against a creature you choose within 2 squares of the original target of the triggering attack and deals 2d10 extra damage on a hit. The new target must still be legal for the attack.

Level 25 Daily Exploit

Warlord's Fury — Warlord Attack 25

You hurl the enemies back onto your allies' waiting weapons.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage and you slide the target 5 squares. The target takes 1[W] extra damage for each of your allies adjacent to it at the end of the slide.
Miss: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage and you slide the target 2 squares.

Level 27 Encounter Exploit

A Plan Comes Together — Warlord Attack 27

You read the enemy's intent and spring your trap. Your allies bring the unsuspecting foe down.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Free Action **Close** burst 10
Trigger: An enemy in burst starts its turn
Primary Target: One ally adjacent to the triggering enemy
Secondary Target: One ally in the burst
Effect: The primary target makes a melee basic attack as a free action against the triggering enemy; on a hit, the target is dazed. Then, the secondary target makes a charge attack as a free action against the triggering enemy; on a hit, the target falls prone.

Level 29 Daily Exploit

Victory by Design — Warlord Attack 29

Leading with an attack announces the start of your cunning stratagem.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Effect: Choose up to four allies within 10 squares of you that can see and hear you. Each ally can either make a charge attack, make a basic attack, or shift up to his or her speed as a free action. The allies that choose to charge or make basic attacks deal 1d10 extra damage on a hit and cannot attack the same target or the target of this attack.

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose more recent work can be found in the *Player's Handbook® 3*, *Martial Power™ 2*, and *Draconomicon™ 2: Metallic Dragons*.

Winning Races: Gnomes

By Brian Yablon
Illustration by Tyler Walpole

Normally viewed as quiet and shy, gnomes live in communities nestled within the deep forests of the Feywild and the world, and they strive to be overlooked by danger as a matter of survival. However, although gnomes have the often well-deserved reputation of wanting to avoid conflict, they are by no means pacifists. Gnomes know that confrontation is inevitable no matter how well a community hides itself—and sometimes, taking the fight to an enemy first is the best defense possible.

Whether in the world—where goblins, kobolds, and other foul creatures threaten their warrens—or in the Feywild—where eldritch beasts, carnivorous plants, and malicious fey threaten them—gnomes have always required ways of combating and dealing with their deadly and often more numerous enemies. As a result, they have developed many specialized fighting techniques that take advantage of their talents for illusion, stealth, the fey magic coursing in their veins, and even their diminutive size, and they turn these techniques against their foes to devastating effect.

Included in this article are two new paragon paths for gnome defenders: one each for the paladin and swordmage. The gnome nightcloak is a stealthy paladin who is as at home striking from the shadows as fighting evil in the light of day. The phantasm guard merges the gnomes' natural affinity for illusions with their swordmage training to produce a unique arcane tradition.

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Backgrounds

The following backgrounds are suitable for any gnome character.

Brawny Gnome

You've always been stronger than your fellow gnomes, and because of that you didn't fit in fully with the other youths. As your friends studied the magical arts and illusions, you were more content to hunt, do physical labor, or drill with the militia. Do you prefer being straightforward and forceful over crafty and quiet? Maybe you seek to prove yourself to members of the larger races, challenging them to arm wrestling and other feats of strength or endurance. Or you might be content to let opponents underestimate you, then surprise them later with unexpected bursts of power.

Associated Skills: Athletics, Endurance

Urban Gnome

You grew up in a large town or city that had large buildings and many people. You're at home in the bustle of town life, and dodging through crowds is second nature. Perhaps you dress in bright and flashy clothing to stand out among the throngs (and to avoid falling underfoot). Or do you cultivate a quieter existence, where you stay out of sight and out of mind so that you can be left to your own devices in the packed streets? Did you ever long for the hidden forest home you never knew, nestled deep among the roots of massive trees? Or do you feel somehow guilty for not being terribly interested in the traditional home of fey creatures? Do gnomes from the forests find you an oddity when they meet you?

Associated Skills: Diplomacy, Streetwise

Gnome Nightcloak

"Striking down evil from the darkness, and returning silently before the light of dawn."

Prerequisite: Gnome, paladin, trained in Stealth

Blending divine magic with your race's gifts for stealth and cunning, you follow the path of the nightcloak. You bend the shadows that can hide villainy to your own purposes. You seek to protect yourself and your allies from threats, and you seek out evil where it hides under cover of darkness—eliminating it silently, before it can erupt forth to threaten the world of light.

An armored defender of your faith, you nonetheless have learned to become a silent predator, shrouded by protective shadowstuff and able to slip in and strike where foes are least prepared. You can step through the boundary between light and dark to cover distance quickly, or briefly disappear from view to find a new position or to make a surprise attack.

Originally created by adherents of Sehanine for missions requiring some degree of subtlety, the nightcloak tradition has since spread to gnomes of all faiths. Indeed, with the gnome value for secrecy and preservation of outward peace, some would say a group of warriors such as the nightcloaks was inevitability. Many nightcloaks defend hidden gnome communities from danger, venturing out to sabotage or eliminate growing threats without leaving a trace of their presence. Still others travel the world, alone or in like-minded bands of heroes, quietly protecting the interests of gnomes and other goodly races by rooting up the seeds of evil in the darkness that shelters it.

Some might question your covert methods, demanding justice be carried out in full view of all; even considering stealth to be tantamount to cowardice. But you know it's best to fight darkness with darkness so that you can preserve the overall peace of the innocents. And besides—nobody will ever see you.

By day you might cultivate an image of the friendly gnome knight in shining armor, but when darkness falls, you assume a sterner demeanor, silently and ruthlessly hunting down corruption and villainy before sunrise, when you return to your gregarious ways with none the wiser.

Gnome Nightcloak Path Features

Veil of Darkness (11th level): You can use your Charisma modifier instead of your Dexterity modifier when making Stealth checks. In addition, when you use your *fade away* racial power, you or one ally adjacent to you gains resistance to all damage equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of your next turn.

Leaping Shadow Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can teleport your speed before or after the action.

From the Shadows (16th level): Once per round when you hit a target marked by you that is also granting combat advantage to you, you may deal 2d6 extra damage to that target.

Gnome Nightcloak Prayers

Shadowstride Rebuke — Gnome Nightcloak Attack 11

As your foe sets up to attack a nearby ally, you appear next to it and drive it back.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Teleportation, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Melee** weapon
Trigger: A creature you can see hits or misses an ally
Effect: You teleport a number of squares equal to your speed and make the following melee attack.
Target: The triggering creature
Attack: Charisma vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Charisma modifier damage, and you push the target 1 square. The target is subject to your divine sanction until the end of your next turn.

Cover of Night — Gnome Nightcloak Utility 12

Darkness swirls around your ally, who then seems to vanish like a wisp of smoke.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Illusion
Minor Action **Close** burst 5
Target: You or one ally in burst
Effect: The target becomes invisible until the start of its next turn or until it attacks.

Tumultuous Shadowflow — Gnome Nightcloak Attack 20

Shadow flows around your blade then surges over your foe after your attack.

Daily ✦ Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Charisma modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, the target takes a –2 penalty to all attacks and cannot benefit from concealment.

PHANTASM GUARD

"You think you've faced your worst nightmare? Sorry, that's coming up next."

Prerequisite: Gnome, swordmage

Gnomes are known for their prowess with illusions, but many outsiders believe such magic is employed merely for hiding and deception. To the gnomes, though, illusions are much more. They serve as a great equalizer, which they use to attack as well as protect. They can assault the minds of foes directly using well-crafted figments and phantasmal perceptions, which are effective regardless of the physical attributes of those involved.

Your race's natural talent for illusions combines with carefully honed swordmage techniques, creating the path of the phantasm guard. Using your magic, you assail the minds of your foes, and punish those who seek to harm your companions by revealing to them glimpses of their worst nightmares and disguising the true nature of threats.

Phantasm guards are often outwardly charming and compassionate gnomes, expressing a keen understanding of and sympathy for their fellow beings. As one, you act as a trustworthy confidant who is concerned with the plights of others. Frequently interested with exploring the meaning of "truth," you might engage in philosophical discussions with others to pass the time. However, the purpose of such kindness is just as often more cynical: the goal being to gain and exploit knowledge of potential adversaries so that you can better and more completely defeat your adversaries' minds if and when the time comes.

Phantasm Guard Path Features

Shadowed Aegis (Level 11): Your allies that have concealment from enemies marked by you instead have total concealment..

Illusory Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you regain the use of your *fade away* power.

Insidious Mind (16th level): When you hit with an attack with the psychic keyword, you gain a +2 bonus to Will until the end of your next turn.

Wave of Dread — Phantasm Guard Attack 11

With a wave of your sword, a cloud of ghostly hands and wailing heads swarms out over your enemies, chilling them to the bone.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Fear, Illusion, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Close** blast 3
Target: Each enemy in blast
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Nightmare Landscape — Phantasm Guard Utility 12

The world darkens and warps. Bushes and trees seem to cling at your enemies, and the earth melts and rises up to engulf their feet.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Illusion, Zone
Standard Action **Close** burst 3
Effect: The burst creates a zone of illusory nightmare terrain that lasts until the end of the encounter. Enemies treat squares within the zone as difficult terrain, and allies within the zone gain concealment.

Illusory Host **Phantasm Guard Attack 20**

A horde of ghostly figures appears around you to act at your command, menacing your enemies with a field of blades and claws.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Illusion, Psychic, Zone
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and you mark the target until the end of your next turn.
Effect: The burst creates a zone of ghostly warriors that lasts until the end of the encounter. Enemies within the zone grant combat advantage, and you can make the following at-will attack:
Opportunity Action
Trigger: An enemy in the zone shifts or makes an attack that does not include you as a target.
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and you mark the target until the end of its next turn.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Armored Warrenguard

Prerequisite: Gnome

Benefit: You ignore the speed penalty normally incurred by chainmail and scale armor. In addition, you gain a +1 bonus to AC against attacks from Large or larger enemies.

Distracting Challenge

Prerequisite: Gnome, paladin, Divine Challenge class feature

Benefit: When a target takes damage from your Divine Challenge, it grants combat advantage until the start of its next turn.

Enshrouding Touch

Prerequisite: Gnome, paladin, *lay on hands* or *virtue's touch* power

Benefit: Each ally targeted by your *lay on hands* or *virtue's touch* power gains concealment until the end of his or her next turn.

About the Author

Brian Yablon is a fan of all the things in D&D that come in small packages but pack a big punch, but especially the fierce gnomes. This is his first contribution to *Dragon*.

Winning Races: Winterkin Eladrin

By Robert J. Schwalb
Illustration by Tyler Walpole

One might mistake the lands ruled by an archfey as being a nation, much like a mortal king might claim dominion over a region in the middle world. Similarities exist, but the archfey's authority is both more and less. Archfey have little interest in interfering with their subjects' lives, and thus do not place expectations on their subjects or concoct complex laws. They leave the fey people to abide by the ancient customs that have always informed life in this unruly plane. The archfey's presence permeates the landscape and its inhabitants, altering them to reflect its nature. Anyone who lives under an archfey's influence for long tends to acquire certain traits and characteristics that set them apart from fey inhabiting other realms in the Feywild.

Among those touched by the archfey and their realms are the winterkin. Cousins to the eladrin found throughout the Summer Lands and on its borders, they retreated to the Winter Lands following the Kinstrife Wars that led to the Sundering. In living apart from other eladrin, the winterkin were changed by their proximity to the Winter Fey, awakening new abilities and new powers from the archfey who rule these lands. Differences aside, the winterkin remain eladrin and share many of the same attitudes and beliefs upheld in the shining cities to the south.

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Physical Qualities

The winterkin share many traits with other eladrin, but centuries spent living alongside the winter fey have left an indelible mark. Winterkin have lighter skin tones, ranging from pale blue to stark white. Hair coloring is equally light, with silver being the dominant color. Albinism is common to the winterkin, and eye color ranges from blood red to ice blue. Winterkin have almost gaunt frames. Still, they are a beautiful people, possessed of uncommon grace and elegance.

Playing a Winterkin Eladrin

The winterkin have strong bonds with the Feywild and rarely emerge from their sparkling realms to venture to other lands let alone the natural world. Living in shining citadels raised along the Cold Lands' wintry borders, the winterkin watch the distant north for trouble and protect their territories from attack by their ancient enemies, the fomorians. These fortresses are more than strongholds; they are cities, replete with glittering towers and delicate bridges, and suffused with the Feywild's wild magic. Only rarely do these bastions drift between worlds, and during these uncommon events the winterkin find their way into the mortal world.

Cultural and geographical distance separates the winterkin from their eladrin cousins. Where the eladrin are content to wile away their days reflecting on the past and future in the comforts afforded by their splendid cities, the winterkin struggle to survive. They must contend with the punishing storms blowing down from the frozen wastes, coax their crops from rocky soil, and preserve what few resources they have for the next generation to follow. Winterkin are a serious people, grounded firmly in the present and without the fanciful flights that grip other fey peoples.

Winterkin are not above raiding and they frequently mount forays into the Feydark to strike at fomorian strongholds or venture into the warmer lands to plunder the softer lands for their bounty. Their warlike nature might arise from necessity, but the winterkin count few friends in the Feywild.

Like all eladrin, the winterkin see Corellon as their maker, but many feel the Lord of Magic has abandoned them, leaving them to fend for themselves in the unforgiving wilderness. As a result, other gods have come to prominence among the winterkin. Melora is popular among the warriors, but even her influence cannot compare to the presence and respect the Raven Queen enjoys.

Winterkin Eladrin Characteristics: Alien, cold, intense, melancholic, menacing, reflective

Winterkin Backgrounds

A winterkin eladrin has access to the following background elements.

Bringers of Spring: The Pale Prince, the Lord of the Longest Night, is chief among those enemies arrayed against the winterkin. An exploitative power, consumed by evil, this archfey tests the winterkin by sending agents forth to infiltrate the border fortresses and turn the winterkin toward his purpose. To combat the Pale Prince's growing threat, many warriors join a loose coalition named the Bringers of Spring, and they make it their life's work to strike against the archfey's forces, root out their infiltrators, and oppose the archfey at all fronts. You were a Bringer of Spring and fought against the archfey's forces. How did this service end? Were you a lone survivor or did you break from the society for another reason? How do you see these warriors now?

Associated Skills: Arcana, History

White Riders: The Winter Lands are short on resources and those living in them must range beyond their borders to gather the supplies they need to survive. Called the white riders for their gleaming armor and the winter wolves they ride, the riders have a ferocity that fey peoples across the lands fear. You were a raider and innocent blood stains your hands. Why were you chosen to become a white rider? Whom did you raid? What experiences haunt you? If none, why did you leave the white riders?

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Nature

Wintertouched: The Pale Prince looms large in the Winter Lands, and while not the true sovereign of the Winter Court, his power grows. Many fear he will claim the entire court and all the winter fey as his own. Those who come into his service are called the wintertouched, because they are his thralls. For a time, you served the Lord of the Longest Night, but you somehow threw off his bonds. What drew you into his service? What missions did you undertake? Why did you quit? Did a single event lead to this decision? If so, what was it?

Associated Skills: Arcana, Stealth

Bralani Wintersoul

"I am the winter storm, the screaming blizzard, and the blinding snow."

Prerequisite: Eladrin

Nobility to the eladrin people is more than status—it is an investiture of power granted by the archfey in exchange for binding oaths and devotion. The eladrin refer to their nobles by many titles, and one traveling in their circles is bound to encounter coure, novier, firre, and others. Each title reflects a particular pact and the magical power gained as a result. The bralani are eladrin nobles who bind themselves to those archfey associated with nature, the seasons, and storms. The power they wield allows them to harness elements and make them their own.

You are a noble eladrin, having earned your greater standing through a pact made with the Winter Court. While the Winter Court expects you to serve it, the archfey rarely call in their debts. Thus you are free to pursue your own agenda as long as it is not at odds with your patron. You can harness winter's power, weaving its wild magical energy into devastating attacks. Your connection to winter triggers other changes. Your skin becomes cold to the touch, your features assume a blue hue, and the air around you holds winter's chill.

Bralani Wintersoul Path Features

Winter's Touch (11th level): When a cold attack hits you, your melee and ranged attacks deal extra cold damage equal to your Dexterity modifier or your Intelligence modifier until the end of your next turn.

Wintersoul Flurry Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to make an attack, you create a zone of flurrying snow in a close burst 5 that lasts until the end of your next turn. Squares in the zone are difficult terrain and lightly obscured for enemies.

Icy Presence (16th level): Any enemy that starts its turn in a square adjacent to you is slowed until the end of its turn.

Bralani Wintersoul Powers

Winter's Kiss — **Bralani Wintersoul 11**

Snow flies and solidifies around your opponent, binding it in a frigid embrace.

Encounter ✦ Cold
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Target: One creature
Attack: Your highest ability modifier + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Your highest ability modifier + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + your highest ability modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of your next turn.
Aftereffect: The target takes 5 cold damage and is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Snowfall — **Bralani Wintersoul 12**

The enemy's attack causes you to fly apart in a cloud of swirling snow.

Encounter ✦ Zone
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 2
Trigger: You are damaged by an attack
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. Squares in the zone are lightly obscured. While you are in the zone, you have concealment and insubstantial.

Blizzard Blast — **Bralani Wintersoul 20**

Snow and ice explodes from your fingertips to scatter your foes and bind them with ice.

Daily ✦ Cold, Teleportation
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Your highest ability modifier + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d6 + your highest ability modifier cold damage, and the target is blinded and immobilized (save ends both).
Miss: Half damage, and until the end of your turn the target takes a –2 penalty to attack rolls and is slowed.
Effect: You teleport to any square within the blast.

Feats

The following feats introduce the Winterkin Heritage feat as well as provide you with options for your winterkin character.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Chilling Presence

Prerequisite: Winterkin Heritage

Benefit: When you use *winter's shroud*, you can deal 5 cold damage to the triggering enemy instead of teleporting. Increase the damage to 10 at 11th level and 15 at 21st level.

Ice Walk

Prerequisite: Winterkin Heritage

Benefit: You ignore difficult terrain that is ice or snow.

Swirling Snow

Prerequisite: Winterkin Heritage

Benefit: Whenever you use *winter's shroud*, until the start of your next turn your square and squares adjacent to you are lightly obscured.

Winterkin Heritage [Eladrin Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Eladrin

Benefit: You gain the *winter's shroud* power. In addition, you gain resist cold equal to 5 + one-half your level.

Winter's Shroud **Winterkin Racial Power**

When the enemy's attack falls, snow swirls around you to whisk you to safety.

Encounter ✦ Teleportation
Immediate Reaction **Personal**
Trigger: An enemy damages you with an attack
Effect: You teleport 3 squares and gain concealment until the start of your next turn.

Winter's Reach

Prerequisite: Winterkin Heritage

Benefit: When you use *winter's shroud*, increase the distance you teleport by a number of squares equal to your Dexterity modifier or your Intelligence modifier.

Paragon Tier Feat

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Winter's Heart

Prerequisite: 11th level, Winterkin Heritage

Benefit: While you are not bloodied, any enemy that hits you with a melee attack is slowed until the end of its turn.

About the Author

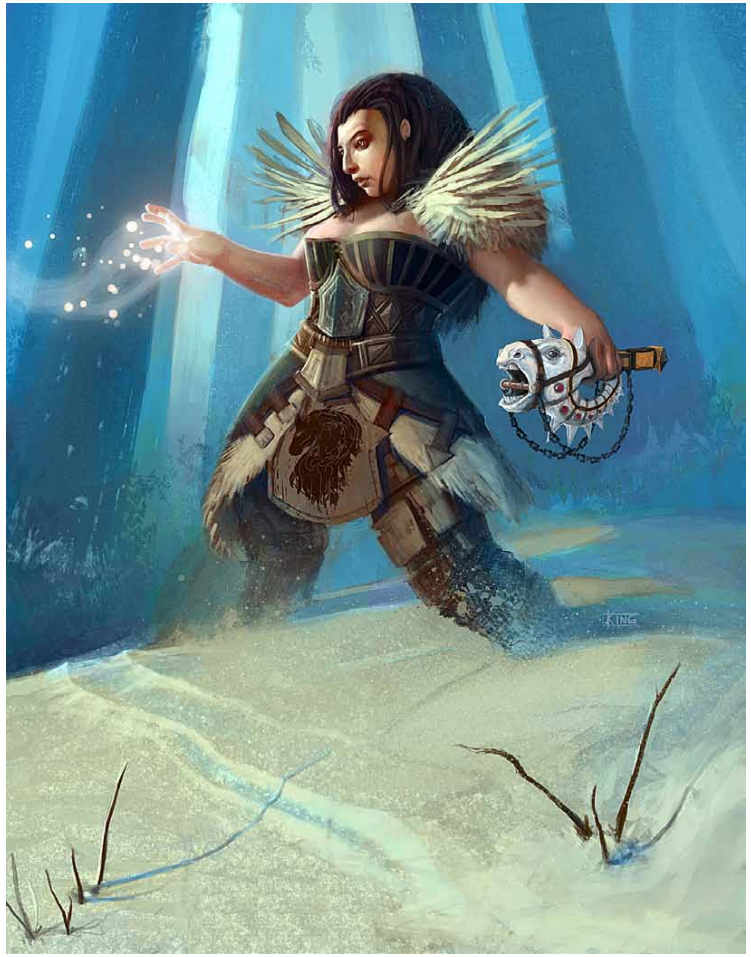
Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose more recent work can be found in *Martial Power™ 2*, *Draconomicon™: Metallic Dragons*, and *Primal Power™*. Robert lives in Tennessee.

Channel Divinity: Mielikki

By Matthew Sernett
Illustration by Chad King

"I rarely pray. I prefer to speak to my goddess through my daily actions, and through my honest emotions. I need not gloss over what has occurred with pretty words, twisting them to show myself most favorably. If Mielikki is with me, then she knows the truth, knows how I act and how I feel."

–Drizzt Do'Urden, in *Starless Night*



The Forest Queen has long dwelt in quiet glades and the peaceful hearts of those who walk the wilderness. Her voice is heard in the whisper of the wind-blown canopy, and her touch is felt by all who look upon a unicorn with wonder. Mielikki is goddess of forests, but she is also a protector of those who enter them. She gives her love to those at home in the wild world or those who seek solace away from civilization.

Mielikki's worshipers rarely gather in great numbers, and she is often prayed to alongside Silvanus and Chauntea. She has no temple as such, and the exact nature of worship to her varies by individual. Hunters give her homage in the hopes of success and then take only what they need from the forest. Travelers through the wild ask her protection and then take care to leave little sign of their passage. Her most devout followers are rangers, wardens, and others who seek to live in complete harmony with the wild–not as beasts themselves but as careful stewards and friends to animals.

Mielikki has been called the Daughter of Silvanus, since her outlook is thought of as the combination of Silvanus's focus on the natural world and the love of Sune, goddess of beauty and affection. Yet however apt the description might be, this notion is merely a romantic fancy. Mielikki works independently of the greater god Silvanus, but her calm presence in the Deep Wilds often serves to temper his wrath at those who despoil the world.

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Backgrounds

Mielikki touches the heart of all who feel wonder in wilderness, but her favored domain is the woodlands of the world. If your character worships Mielikki, where did he or she gain an appreciation for the natural world? One easy way to make this decision is to base it upon a forest in the region from which your character comes. Below are brief background suggestions for the major forests of the regions and a pointer for where to find more information about the woodland.

Playing a Devotee of Mielikki

As a devotee of Mielikki, you live to protect the natural world from destruction. Yet Mielikki is not unaligned like Silvanus. Mielikki hopes you act not only for the good of the natural world, but the world as a whole.

Ignorance fells more forests than evil, so it is your duty to teach as well as defend. You try to live in harmony with the natural world, and it's your calling to help others to learn to do the same.

Just remember that although you're playing a hero of nature, your friends might not be. It's not your job as a servant of Mielikki to impose her values upon others. Your character is supposed to lead by example and help others to see the value of living in harmony with the world. Remember also that your character might be flawed or pragmatic. Sometimes you'll make the wrong decisions for the right reasons.

Aglarond: See page 76 of the *Forgotten Realms® Player's Guide* for information about the Yuirwood and check out page 77 for the Yuirwood Ranger background.

Amn: See page 80 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the Snakewood. Perhaps you delved into the Snakewood in search of the absent green dragon's lair and discovered instead a faith in Mielikki after she protected you from the dangers of the snake-filled forest.

Baldur's Gate: See page 82 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the Cloak Wood and Werewoods. You might be from a family of loggers of the Cloak Wood and be the one who ended the threat to them with Mielikki's aid. The Werewoods could be a great background location for a shifter character.

Cormyr: See page 88 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the King's Forest. Perhaps you were a poacher or a hero of the people—like Robin Hood, who opposed a corrupt official.

Dalelands: See pages 90 and 91 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the Cormanthor. Perhaps you're an ally to the elves or citizen of Myth Drannor and found Mielikki a more appealing deity than Corellon. Alternatively, perhaps you are a lone drow survivor of the purges of the wood. See Myth Drannor for more information.

Dragon Coast: See pages 92 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the Gulthandor Forest. This forest hosts many fey and half-elves, and most are initially welcoming of strangers. Perhaps you were a pirate who thought to take advantage of the forest's hospitality but learned instead to love the place.

Gray Vale: See page 100 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the High Forest and page 101 for information about the Southwood. Check out page 101 for the Savage Youth and Woodland Hunter backgrounds.

Great Dale: See page 102 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the Dunwood and Forest of Lethyr. Check out the Adventurers section on page 103 for three great backgrounds.

Impiltur: See page 106 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the Gray Forest. Perhaps you ventured into the forest and became possessed by an eladrin ghost. Now your only solace is the beauty of the wilderness. Spend too long in civilized lands and the ghost's personality begins to take over.

Lurar: See page 108 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about the Glimmerwood. This is a great location for shifter, half-orc, or barbarian characters to have learned about Mielikki. If you're not native to the wood, perhaps you ventured in following rumors of Everlund's lost elder (see page 109).

Myth Drannor: See pages 114 and 115 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for general information about the Forest of Cormanthor. Both the "Adventurers" and "Character Motivations" sections offer great background ideas for a follower of Mielikki.

Vilhon Wilds: See page 126 of the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide* for information about Chondalwood. Read the "Adventurers" and "Character Motivations" sections to see great background ideas for a follower of Mielikki.

Another Forest: Plenty of named and unnamed forests throughout the world do not have much, if anything, written about them. If you want to have discovered Mielikki in one of these woodlands, work with your DM to devise details about the place.

Feats

Below you'll find feats useful—but not necessarily unique—to Mielikki's faithful.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Shadow of the Wild

Prerequisite: Trained in Nature and Stealth

Benefit: If you are hidden outdoors and you make an attack, you can make a Stealth check with a -5 penalty to remain hidden.

Wilderness Wariness

Prerequisite: Trained in Nature and Stealth

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Perception checks.

In addition, if you are outdoors and have any cover or concealment when you make an initiative check, you can make a Stealth check to become hidden.

Paragon Tier Feat

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Forest Walk

Prerequisite: 11th level, trained in Nature

Benefit: You ignore difficult terrain in encounter areas where the difficult terrain is the result of trees, underbrush, plants, or natural growth. This feat does not allow you to ignore challenging or hindering terrain.

Paragon Path: Favored of Mielikki

"I know Mielikki is with me because I sense her. I feel her touch as the wind. I hear her voice in the whisper of leaves. I see her beauty in the scene around us. Her presence is as real as yours. She embraces us with every reverent step we take in the wilderness."

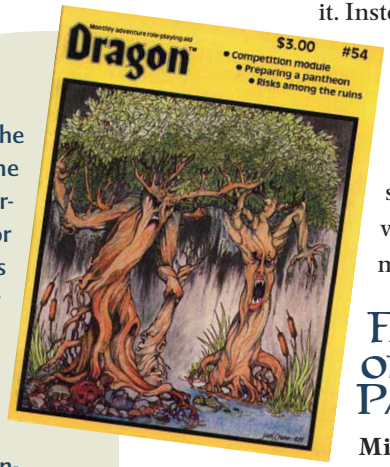
Prerequisite: Good or lawful good, must worship Mielikki

The Real Mielikki

Like many deities created for D&D® over the years, Mielikki has roots in reality. In the *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic, the character of Lemminkäinen prays to Mielikki for aid in hunting, and Ilmarinen's wife prays to Mielikki to keep her cattle safe as they wander the forest. Mielikki also plays a role in the creation of the bear. Mielikki is thus viewed as a woodland goddess.

Ed Greenwood used the real Mielikki as his inspiration for her first published mention as a D&D deity in his article "Down to Earth Divinity" from *Dragon* #54. R. A. Salvatore then elevated Mielikki's importance to the Forgotten Realms setting by making her the favored deity of Drizzt Do'Urden thanks to the blind ranger Montolio Debrouchee, and later as the goddess of Pikel Bouldershoulder, the dwarf druid in the R. A. Salvatore's Cleric Quintet series of novels.

If you're interested in reading the *Kalevala*, you can check it out for free at www.sacred-texts.com/neu/kveng, or you can get a free Kindle download of the text from amazon.com.



You've felt a love for the wilderness for your entire life. Its grand vistas impress you, and even its smallest wonders give you reason for delight. When you learned of Mielikki, it was like reuniting with a longtime friend. You've striven at length in her service, and your efforts have not gone unrewarded.

Mielikki smiles upon those who pursue peace with the natural world and share that view with others. Thus you strive to spread understanding of nature's laws even as you battle to uphold them. It is not enough to protect the world from those who live in it. Instead, those who live in the world must be taught to protect it. Of course, a student does not learn from a teacher with infinite patience; those too stubborn or stupid to learn the error of their ways do not deserve nature's many gifts.

Favored of Mielikki Path Features

Mielikki's Generosity (11th level): When you spend an action point, instead of gaining an extra action, you can grant an ally you can see an extra action (minor, move, or standard) that the ally can take as a free action. You can then spend a healing surge.

Mielikki's Sight (11th level): Your attacks do not take penalties for cover or concealment when your target is outdoors.

Mielikki's Judgment (16th level): Your attacks against beasts, plants, and aberrant creatures score critical hits on rolls of 19-20. In addition, when you score a critical hit on a target that is outdoors, the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Favored of Mielikki Powers

Protective Vines — Favored of Mielikki 11

Mielikki causes a growth of plants to constrict your foes and protect your friends.

Encounter ✦ Charm
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each enemy in blast
Attack: Your highest ability score modifier + 6 vs. Reflex
Level 21: Your highest ability score modifier + 9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + your highest ability score modifier damage. The target is slowed and cannot make opportunity attacks until the end of your next turn.
Level 21: 3d6 + your highest ability score modifier damage, and the target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Treestride — Favored of Mielikki Utility 12

Your faith in Mielikki opens pathways that only creatures as close to nature as dryads can see.

Daily ✦ Teleportation
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you can use a minor action to teleport up to 20 squares if you begin and end the teleport adjacent to a plant or plant creature of Large size or larger.

Call of the Forest — Favored of Mielikki Attack 20

You draw on your connection to primal nature to cause constricting verdant growth to ensnare your enemies.

Daily ✦ Zone
Standard Action **Area** burst 3 within 10
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Your highest ability score modifier + 9 vs. Will
Hit: 3d8 + highest ability modifier damage and the target is restrained (save ends).
Effect: The burst creates a zone of verdant growth. The verdant growth is difficult terrain and heavily obscured. Each enemy that ends its turn in the zone takes 10 damage or falls prone (enemy's choice). Each beast ally and plant ally within the zone gains a +2 power bonus to attack rolls until the end of the encounter.

Other Character Elements

A number of extant character options suit a follower of Mielikki well. Below are just a few.

Feats	
Camouflage	*Martial Power™*
Defender of the Wild	*Player's Handbook® 2*
Fleetness of Mielikki	*Forgotten Realms Player's Guide*
Grasp of the Wild	*Divine Power™*
Initiate of the Old Faith	*Player's Handbook 2*
Power of the Wilderness	*Divine Power*
Warrior of the Wild	*Player's Handbook*

Paragon Paths	
Avenger: Serene Initiate	*Divine Power*
Barbarian: Bear Warrior	*Player's Handbook 2*
Barbarian: Wildrunner	*Player's Handbook 2*
Cleric: Compassionate Healer	*Divine Power*
Cleric: Messenger of Peace	*Divine Power*
Elf: Twilight Guardian	*Player's Handbook 2*
Elf, Ranger: Sylvan Archer	*Martial Power*
Paladin: Faithful Shield	*Divine Power*
Paladin: Hospitaler	*Player's Handbook*
Ranger: Feral Spirit	*Martial Power*
Ranger: Horizon Walker	*Martial Power*
Ranger: High Forest Scout	*Forgotten Realms Player's Guide*
Ranger: Pack Runner	*Martial Power*
Ranger: Pathfinder	*Player's Handbook*
Ranger: Wildcat Stalker	*Martial Power*
Seeker: Crimson Hunter	*Player's Handbook 3*
Seeker: Seven Fates Archer	*Player's Handbook 3*
Shaman: Ghost Panther	*Player's Handbook 2*
Shaman: Great Bear Shaman	*Player's Handbook 2*
Warden: Bloodwrath Guardian	*Player's Handbook 2*
Warlord: Pack Master	*Dragon® Magazine #364*
Warden: Horned Champion	*Player's Handbook 2*
Warden: Verdant Lord	*Player's Handbook 2*

Epic Destinies	
Avatar of Freedom	*Divine Power*
Avatar of Hope	*Divine Power*
Avatar of Life	*Divine Power*
Chosen	*Forgotten Realms Player's Guide*
Divine Class: Saint	*Divine Power*
Harper of Legend	*Dragon Magazine #367*
Primal Class: Glorious Spirit	*Player's Handbook 2*
Primal Class: Primal Avatar	*Player's Handbook 2*
Fighter: Eternal Defender	*Martial Power*
Ranger: Beastlord	*Martial Power*

About the Author

Matt Sernett started with Wizards of the Coast in 2000 as an assistant editor for both the **Dragon**® and **Dungeon**® magazines. Matt followed the magazines when they transferred to Paizo Publishing, eventually becoming Editor-in-Chief of Dragon. In 2004 Matt returned to Wizards of the Coast as a designer for **D&D**®, changing title in 2007 when he became a creative designer for digital games at the company. Today Matt splits his time between design for **D&D** and doing world-building and writing flavor text for **Magic: The Gathering**.®

Channel Divinity: Avandra's Fortunes

By Robert J. Schwalb
Illustration by Chad King

Ancient compacts forged long ago might prevent the gods from taking a direct hand in mortal affairs, but one does not have to look hard to find the gods' influence in the natural world. Each deity has concerns and interests in the world, and people can know the gods better through these interests. Most mortals, however, lack the wisdom and will to benefit from them, to receive the divine insights, or to recognize the presence of the gods in the rich and diverse world around them.

However, if there's one god all adventurers can recognize, it's Avandra, because her interests are bound tightly to adventure's spirit. Avandra is the patron of freedom, exploration, travel, and above all, luck. She is the bringer of change, the indomitable spirit, and serendipity incarnate. She is a hero's constant companion and an oppressor's bitterest enemy. She is freedom in divine flesh, beholden to no law but her own. And to those looking for hope and liberty in a world of darkness and upheaval, they need only look to the road ahead, because she is there, beckoning all to throw off oppression's chains and live life as it was intended.

Mortals come to Avandra for many reasons, but most adventurers court her because she is Lady Luck. One prays to her for prosperity and good fortune, and they seek her blessing when they need help in finding a positive outcome in the direst circumstances. Given the adventurer's life of unequaled mayhem, Avandra proves a useful, if sometimes fickle, patron, and through her adventurers can find victory where others would find defeat, treasure where others might find death, and glory where countless others have found only obscurity.

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New Feats

The following feats help Avandra's devotees make luck their strong ally. Any character that meets the prerequisites can take these feats.

Accursed Challenge

Prerequisite: Paladin, must worship Avandra

Benefit: Whenever a creature marked by you makes an attack that does not include you as its target, that target takes a –2 penalty to saving throws until the start of its next turn.

Avandra's Boon

Prerequisite: Any divine class, must worship Avandra

Benefit: Whenever you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll or saving throw, you gain a +2 bonus to your next attack roll or saving throw made before the end of your next turn.

Avandra's Covenant

Prerequisite: Invoker, Divine Covenant class feature, must worship Avandra

Benefit: When you use a divine encounter or daily attack power on your turn, you can allow an ally within 10 squares of you to make a saving throw instead of using your covenant manifestation.

Bountiful Fortune

Prerequisite: Cleric, *divine fortune* power, must worship Avandra

Benefit: When you use *divine fortune*, you and each ally adjacent to you gain temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier.

Confounding Luck

Prerequisite: Halfling, *second chance* power, must worship Avandra

Benefit: When you use your *second chance* racial power and the triggering enemy's attack misses, that enemy takes a –2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of your next turn.

Guileful Shift

Prerequisite: Halfling, avenger, must worship Avandra

Benefit: When your *oath of enmity* target misses you with an attack, you can shift 1 square to a square closer to or adjacent to the target as a free action.

Halfling's Strength

Prerequisite: Halfling, paladin, *divine strength* power, must worship Avandra

Benefit: Increase the bonus you gain from *divine strength* to Strength modifier + 4.

Lucky Retribution

Prerequisite: Halfling, invoker, must worship Avandra

Benefit: Whenever an enemy misses you with an attack, you gain combat advantage with your invoker attack powers against that enemy until the end of your next turn.

Vengeance's Reward

Prerequisite: Avenger, must worship Avandra

Benefit: When you drop your *oath of enmity* target to 0 hit points, you and each ally adjacent to the target gain a +2 bonus to saving throws until the end of your next turn.

Avandra and Halflings

The connection between Avandra and the halfling race is as old as the halflings themselves. Legend holds Avandra favored these people, finding much to like in their good natures and friendly dispositions. However, she feared for them, rightly sensing that cruel tyrants would conquer the small and personable folk. Rather than see their bright spirits dimmed by oppression, Avandra gifted the halflings with good fortune to give them an edge they needed to survive. For this reason, many halflings name Avandra as their patron deity, and those who go on to become divine champions frequently choose her over other gods.

Fortune Blessed

"The odds are stacked in my favor."

Prerequisite: Any divine class, must worship Avandra

Serendipity favors you. You have long proved a constant and loyal servant to Avandra by making her interests your own in your ongoing struggle against tyranny and in your willingness to explore the world and sample all it has to offer. Your virtuous soul and good works have won you the goddess's favor, and although you know you were ever in her good graces, you realize you have only touched upon what is possible in her service.

Becoming fortune blessed makes luck your servant, yours to shape and manipulate as you desire. The goddess permits this mastery as long as you advance her aims in the world and remain pure of heart and purpose. You have a knack for husbanding your good fortune and turning setbacks to your advantage. The greater your power becomes, the more the impossible becomes possible until one day you find there is nothing you can't achieve with luck on your side.

Fortune Blessed Path Features

Avandra's Luck (11th level): Whenever you roll a natural 1 or 20 on an attack roll or saving throw during an encounter, you gain 1 luck token. Luck tokens remain until you spend them or until you take an extended rest, at which point you remove all unexpended luck tokens.

Whenever you make an attack roll, saving throw, ability check, or skill check on your turn, you can expend one luck token after seeing the result. Roll a d6. On a result of 1-3, you gain a +1 bonus to the triggering roll. On a 4 or 5, you gain a +2 bonus to the triggering roll. On a 6, you can reroll the triggering roll and use the result you like. You have no limit to the number of luck tokens you can spend during an encounter, but you can spend only one token per turn.

Fortune Blessed Implements (11th level): You can use any implements you would ordinarily use for divine powers with fortune blessed implement prayers.

Lucky Action (11th level): Whenever you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can make a saving throw. If the saving throw succeeds, you also gain one luck token.

Swift Luck (16th level): The first time in each encounter that you roll a natural 18, 19, or 20 on an attack roll or saving throw, you can take an extra move action on your next turn.

Fortune Blessed Prayers

Misfortune's Curse — **Fortune Blessed Attack 11**

You steal a bit of luck from your enemy to leave the foe fumbling and stumbling through the fight.

Encounter ✦ Divine
Immediate Reaction **Melee** touch
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to you misses you with a melee attack
Target: One creature
Effect: The triggering enemy repeats the attack against a legal target of your choice or itself, with a +2 bonus to the attack roll. If the attack hits and deals damage, it deals extra damage equal to your highest ability modifier. In addition, if have 0 luck tokens when you use this power, you gain 1 luck token.

Lucky Break — **Fortune Blessed Utility 12**

Unexpected fortune turns a certain injury or even death into a close call.

Daily ✦ Divine
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You take damage
Effect: Reduce the triggering damage by your healing surge value. You can spend 1 luck token to add 1d20 to this amount. If this reduces the damage to 0, you also shift 1 square.

Avandra's Curse — **Fortune Blessed Attack 20**

You call to Avandra and ask the goddess to lift her gaze from your enemy. For a time, nothing goes right for your chosen foe.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Highest ability vs. Will
Hit: 2d8 + highest ability modifier psychic damage.
Effect: The target is dazed, slowed, takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls, and takes psychic damage equal to your highest ability modifier the first time it misses with an attack on its turn (save ends all). Whenever the target succeeds on a saving throw to end the effect, you can spend 1 luck token as an immediate interrupt to force the target to reroll the saving throw and use the second result.

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose most recent work can be found in the *Player's Handbook 3*, *Martial Power 2*, and *Draconomicon 2: Metallic Dragons*.

Debut Commentary: The Battlemind

By Mike Mearls

Of all the classes in *Player's Handbook 3*, the battlemind walked the longest road from concept to final execution. We knew we wanted a psionic defender, but I've never been happy with building a class solely on the intersection of a power source and a role. While those two things are useful descriptors, they aren't the exciting part of D&D. Nobody dreams of being the "martial defender" who defeats the rampaging dragon. Players want to be fighters, wizards, clerics, and rogues. They want to be part of a living, breathing fantasy world.

With that in mind, I had to come up with a concept for the battlemind that would make the class distinct. Even though little of that flavor would shine through in the class's presentation, it was important to come up with a context for each mechanical aspect of the class.

The original direction, one that didn't survive the design and development process, cast the battlemind as a warrior of the Feywild. The class's original name was the ironjack. I liked the idea of a trickster warrior, a champion that used cunning, strength, and deception in equal measure. To give you a sense of the concept I had in mind, check out the cover of Horslip's "Dearg Doom" by the metal band Slough Feg. I really like the story that song tells, and the character it creates felt like a perfect fit for a battlemind.

Unfortunately, that concept didn't hold up well with psionic magic as its power source. The link to the Feywild felt tenuous at best, forced at worst. Some of the concepts of that class survive, but its flavor and concept were rolled back to a more typical, psionic warrior. Speaking of which, the psychic warrior name was one that seemed a little too generic. Battlemind ties into a good chunk of the class's flavor. It felt like a better fit that served the specifics of the class.

Speed of thought is a great example of a power born in the ironjack phase. It was originally intended as a power that reflected the ironjack's battle lust, confidence, and speed. It serves a similar role for the battlemind, though it is more driven by the power of psionic magic than anything else. As a mechanic, it was inspired by multiple instances in my campaigns where the fighter or warden was stuck at the back of the party at the start of a fight. With a few bad initiative results, the monsters were upon the group before the defender could move into position. *Speed of thought* doesn't completely solve the problem, but it does give the battlemind a lot more flexibility. I also liked the cerebral aspect of a warrior who always knows where to position himself at the start of a fight.

The *battlemind's demand* power drew a bit from both the swordmage and the warden. It allows a battlemind to mark a target for a longer period of time, primarily to make the augment option a more compelling choice. It also prevents the battlemind from suffering too badly when dazed or otherwise short on actions.

Mind spike is an attempt to subtly encourage a battlemind to seek out bigger, more-melee oriented enemies. The feedback loop it creates levies a harsher penalty against high damage enemies, while also guaranteeing the destruction of a marked minion. It lacks the predictable output of the paladin's marking ability, and it is less effective against creatures that rely on conditions and effects other than damage.

The battlemind's encounter and daily powers run along a few, key themes. If you're familiar with psionics in previous D&D editions, they should look familiar.

Finally, battleminds are good at using psionic magic to transform their bodies. A battlemind can turn his flesh into metal or gain the strength and reach of a giant. However, you'll have to wait until the release of *Player's Handbook 3* to see those powers. This preview focuses on the battlemind's powers that have more of a telepathic, mind control bent to them. They allow a battlemind to twist his enemy's senses, place phantoms in its mind, and otherwise lure it into bad decisions or positions through psionic manipulation.

So, that's the battlemind in brief. Have fun with it!

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Design & Development: Martial Power 2

By Rodney Thompson & Richard Baker

Got steel? *Martial Power 2* is a brand-new Dungeons & Dragons sourcebook that hits the shelves in March. Richard Baker (lead designer for *Martial Power 2*) and Rodney Thompson (lead developer for the book) take a few minutes to share their thoughts about building a sourcebook full of new builds, powers, feats, and features for martial heroes.

Rodney: The *Martial Power 2* sourcebook introduces a variety of new options for fighters, rogues, rangers, and warlords. Since this book was the second power book for martial characters, we had the opportunity to try some new things and experiment with play styles. One of the goals of the book is to find new ways for players to use classes that have been around since the first *Player's Handbook* for 4th Edition, to make those classes seem new and fresh for someone that has played them before.

Rich: With that in mind, we set out to outline a book that wouldn't obsolete the *Player's Handbook* or *Martial Power,* but instead reinforce existing options as we broke into some new design space. The first step in outlining *Martial Power 2* was to examine the existing options for martial characters. What sort of martial hero did you want to play that you couldn't play now? Was there an obvious build possibility that hasn't been explored yet? How could we provide players with something new and interesting without abandoning or invalidating previous options?

Sometimes, design space was suggested by older material in the game. For example, the brawling fighter has its roots in 2nd Edition's *Complete Fighter's Handbook* and the combat styles described there. In comparing 4th Edition to previous editions, I noticed that three of the four styles described in that old sourcebook appeared in 4th Edition fighter builds, but the one-handed style hadn't yet. That got me to thinking about why someone would choose to leave that second hand free, which bumped into some other musings I'd had about ways to give defenders more "sticky" powers. The shadowy rogue build was conceived as a way to represent a rogue that moved and felt a little more like the thief of earlier editions, a character who relied on stealth as his primary method for generating combat advantage and spent more time skulking about setting up his attacks, instead of rushing in to flank at the first opportunity.

Design space also grew from play patterns or story opportunities suggested by existing 4th Edition material. For example, early in the outlining process, Michele Carter (one of our editors, who plays a rogue in a regular game) lamented the fact that the 4th Edition character building rules made it pretty suboptimal to play a smart rogue. Since rogues rely on Dexterity and Dexterity covers the Dex-Int ability pair for determining your defenses, you're better off spending your ability scores elsewhere. By creating a high-Intelligence rogue option, we'd not only make Michele happy, but we would also help out all the other players who might have noticed this same problem. And this would also shake up the mix of races who make good rogue characters.

We saw another potential opportunity for something new with the warlord. Unlike the other martial classes, the warlord didn't have a long history in the D&D game—its most distant ancestor was the marshal from 3rd Edition's *Miniatures Handbook*. Early in the 4th Edition design process, I wrote a class description for the warlord that attempted to hammer out some breadth of concept for the class. I threw out terms like "barbarian warchief," "elven firstblade," or "halfling marchwarden." When I brainstormed ideas for the *Martial Power 2* warlord, the thing I kept coming back to was the idea of what elven, dwarven, or halfling warlords might be like. None of these races made especially good warlords, simply because of the ability score preferences of the class. But it seemed to me that there was a real opportunity to broaden the class concept in *MP 2*. As a result, the insightful warlord and the skirmishing warlord were born.

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THE WISE WARLORD

Rich: Between the various warlord builds from the *Player's Handbook* and *Martial Power*, I felt that we had the idea of intelligent and charismatic melee-focused warlords covered pretty well. To create some new space for the warlord, we'd have to find a way to change up the mix. The first thing we decided to try was a warlord that featured Wisdom as a secondary ability.

By making a warlord that rewarded a good Wisdom score, we opened up a new array of races for the warlord class. Before, if you wanted to play a dwarf leader, it was really suboptimal to not be a cleric. That was sort of a shame, since we had scads of flavor and history on the dwarf race suggesting that warlords would fit quite well in their culture. Likewise, elves now had w ay in to the warlord.

Of course, simply changing up the secondary ability for its own sake wasn't good enough. We needed to come up with a story hook on what exactly wise warlords did that was different from intelligent or charismatic warlords. Why would one power refer to Intelligence, and a different power to Wisdom? What exactly is the wise warlord doing if he's not outmaneuvering his enemies or inspiring his allies? The answer we came up with was the idea of an intuitive "gut reaction" warlord, one who was good at reading enemy intentions and anticipating trouble. With that in mind, we designed a number of immediate-action powers for the insightful warlord to reflect his uncanny ability to guess correctly and react quickly.

Rodney: But just making one of the new warlord builds, the insightful warlord, Wisdom friendly introduced several challenges. During development we decided to embrace that idea for the skirmishing warlord (the second warlord build in the book), as well. The introduction of a new secondary statistic drastically narrows the pool of powers that a player can draw upon when creating a character. Having both warlord builds in this book that use Wisdom certainly provides more choice for the new breed of Wisdom-secondary warlords, but that also means that these powers wouldn't be as useful to players of other warlord builds.

At this point, we realized that we could make these powers much more useful to other warlords by having the powers refer to two secondary ability scores. As a result, many of the insightful warlords use Wisdom or Charisma as a secondary statistic, while the skirmishing warlord can use Wisdom or Intelligence. Overall, this gives warlord players a lot more flexibility in their choice of powers and secondary ability scores, and it opens up the class to all those new races Rich spoke of.

THE RANGED WARLORD

Rich: The other half of our effort to break out some new space for the warlord involved the skirmishing warlord, as well—a ranged version of a class that was formerly strictly melee. The skirmishing warlord concept arose from the same observations I'd had about the way different races ought to approach the class; it just seemed natural that an elf or halfling warlord would prefer to do her work with a bow.

At first, we started to design the skirmishing warlord as a set of class-feature replacements and exceptions, but Tavis Allison and Eytan Bernstein, the freelance designers who worked on the warlord chapter, came back to me and suggested that what we were looking at here was really a whole new build, and not simply an alternate class feature. Of course, they were right, so I revised the outline and turned 'em loose.

We hit a tough hurdle with the question of the skirmishing warlord's primary ability. Most ranged attacks are Dexterity-based, so we wrestled with the question of whether we should make the skirmishing warlord powers Dexterity attacks. Of course, that would have made all the other warlord powers in the game pretty unattractive, since they're Strength-based. Ultimately we decided that it was okay to keep the skirmishing warlord powers as Strength attacks. After all, he could easily be a distance warlord by throwing spears or axes, and if he decided to be a Strength-based bow wielder, well, there are plenty of literary examples of very strong bowmen (Hercules and Odysseus leap to mind).

Rodney: The Skirmishing Warlord build represents a pretty radical departure from the normal warlord's modus operandi. Whereas the warlord in the *Player's Handbook* is a melee combatant, the skirmishing warlord pulls the character back from the front lines to fight as an archer from the rear ranks. Thus far, new builds have not created such a fundamental shift in the location the character can be found on the battlefield. That said, we have experimented with attacks for some classes (like the warlock, bard, and artificer) that work well either from melee or at range, but the skirmishing warlord is the first time we've taken a character class designed solely for melee combat and pulled it back to range. The warlord seemed to be a good choice because it doesn't necessarily require the character

to be in melee to fulfill its role as a leader. (In fact, the leader role is one that, like the striker role, can do its job in melee or at range without much complication.) Furthermore, many of the warlords out there use polearms and other reach weapons already, and the line between a melee combatant with reach and a ranged combatant isn't very large.

When the skirmishing warlord came into development, we knew right away that there were several big hurdles we had to cross before the build would feel viable to players approaching the book. A big problem with introducing a build that is such a big departure mechanically is that there will inevitably be fewer options for players of those characters. Someone approaching the warlord class would find two books full of melee powers (not to mention those found on *D&D Insider*), whereas this book would be the only source for ranged attack powers. Likewise, a whole new suite of ranged attack powers would be all but useless to most melee warlords.

The former problem we tried to solve with the new combat styles (explained below), but the latter problem led us to make sure that some of the new powers could be used both in melee and at range. That way, we could maximize the number of powers useful to the skirmishing warlord while still making them available to melee warlords.

To make the skirmishing warlord work and still feel balanced against other builds, we gave the build the ability to use Strength for ranged basic attacks, but took away proficiency in the light shield and chainmail. No longer thrust into melee, the warlord suddenly becomes the target of fewer attacks, and thus needs the AC boost from those proficiencies less. The ability to use Strength for ranged basic attacks also lets the skirmishing warlord play well with the other warlord builds that grant basic attacks, meaning that two warlords in the same party can feel very different in the way they play, yet work well as a team.

COMBAT STYLES

Rich: While we could have designed *Martial Power 2* without introducing any new game elements, we felt that we needed to show off a few things that no one had seen before. One of the major new systems introduced in the book comes in a series of feats collectively called combat styles. Combat styles were intended to boost weapon users' options when specializing in a particular weapon, so that weapon choice can be an even more iconic part of your character. More so than other characters, martial heroes have reasons to care about their exact weapon selection, and players of martial heroes want to feel like their choice of weapon is important.

To build a combat style system, we grouped similar weapons together into sets that could share a common technique or thematic approach. To accommodate the possibility of new weapons being added to the game system later, we described these groups by their basic game identities—for example, one-handed versatile blades, or two-handed maces and hammers, or off-hand light blades. In a few cases, we looked for groups that would include weapons that didn't see a lot of play from the martial classes (the mace or spear, for example) to make some interesting new combinations possible.

The chassis of the combat style system came from the domain feats of Divine Power. We had a couple of reasons for doing this: First, we wanted combat styles to be "domains for martial characters"—an important flavor element that explained why your character preferred a particular weapon and made otherwise similar martial characters feel different from each other. Second, we don't necessarily want players to have to learn many different ways of doing similar things. Since domain feats are out there already, and folks understand how they work, we wanted to take advantage of that familiarity in the player base.

The second level of combat style "specialization" we designed was a set of once per encounter "critical riders" or 1-round stances that essentially gave you an additional power that related to your chosen style. Real estate (both physical space and conceptual space) is a valuable commodity in sourcebooks. Once you've spent time describing something like the Tiger Claw style or the Nerathan High Blade style, it's efficient to provide additional options or depth on that same topic. In other words, twenty-five "deep" styles are generally better than fifty "shallow" ones. With that in mind, we turned over a combat style system that featured a beginner's level—the feats that modified at-will powers—and more advanced levels for characters who wanted to continue their feat investment.

Rodney: The original fighting styles turned over to development included a new feat that altered your at-will attacks based on the weapons you used, and then a second feat that gave you a new power. The power was triggered when you hit an enemy with the weapon, but during development we realized that this was not only too complicated a way to express relatively simple effects, but also added a whole new power to your character ... and characters already have a lot of powers.

Our initial attempt to resolve the issues with the second-tier combat style feats resulted in us cutting

the new powers altogether and then just folding the benefits of those powers into a new feat. Around that time in development, we published a few of the revised combat styles on *D&D Insider* as playtest content.

Around the same time, we had a bit of an epiphany as to what role the fighting styles should serve. More than just more feats that let you specialize in particular weapons, the combat styles needed to be something that really stood out, mechanically, and let you do something you couldn't otherwise do without this feat. Additionally, feats are often either forgotten (because their effects are so minor the player doesn't remember them) or slow the game down (because they create if/then scenarios where the player has to figure out which of his conditional feats applies to the current situation). Since we wanted to make sure that these combat style feats didn't introduce more problems along those lines, we decided to tie the combat styles not only to specific weapons but also specific powers. When you tie a feat to a particular power, you can write that feat's effect down on your power card (or your cheat sheet, if you're like me and don't use power cards) and then you are always reminded of its effect every time you use that power.

When playtest feedback started coming back in, it confirmed out suspicions. The playtested feats were often either forgettable or slow to use, and not exactly lighting up the message boards with interest. Fighting styles needed to contribute more significantly to the game, and be tied directly to powers to be easier to use. However, tying a feat to a single power makes the feat far less useful, so we needed to make sure the second-tier feats weren't too narrow. Thus, the Greater Style Feats were born.

The Greater Style Feats

Rodney: The first-tier combat style feats already spoke directly to at-will powers, so little needed to be done to make them fit the model we wanted. With two goals for the second-tier feats (tie them to powers, and make them really have an impact on the way you build and play your character), we decided to have these feats do for encounter powers what the first-tier feats did for at-wills. When you take one of the second-tier feats, it modifies your encounter powers in some way. Likewise, since we didn't want the feats to only come into play once per encounter, that meant that each feat needed to cover multiple encounter powers across a span of levels. That way, if you take the powers related to the style, you're gaining the style benefit each time you use one of those powers so the feat comes into play multiple times. At that point, each of the second-tier feats had to become multiple feats, one for each class that could potentially take the combat style, as the feats would simply run too long if we tried to include one feat covering multiple encounter powers from multiple classes.

Another added benefit of this approach was that it allowed us to take powers that otherwise might be less appealing in general and make them better choices by adding on new benefits. The best powers in the game don't need such help, but powers that are seen as weaker or more corner case may now be more viable options thanks to combat styles. More choice is better, and the greater style feats hopefully make it so that choosing a power at a given level provides more options thanks to the boost given by combat styles.

Along similar lines, the greater style feats also gave us a chance to address one of the concerns I talked about earlier, that of new builds having fewer power choices than older builds. Many of the greater style feats modify encounter powers in such a way that the power is now more appealing to players of one of the new builds. For example, the Adamant Arrow Commander feat makes a suite of six powers from the *Player's Handbook* and *Martial Power* into powers that can be used at range, opening them up as options for the skirmishing warlord. That way, the combat style opens up a whole array of power choices that didn't exist before, letting the player customize the character a bit further.

The last step in the creation of the greater style feats actually came during the editing process. At a certain point, we realized that, due to the number of combat styles versus the number of powers compatible with what we wanted those styles to do, we were introducing a degree of overlap between the powers augmented by the greater style feats. Since overlapping mechanics often lead to unintended consequences (both those that end up being too powerful and those that just don't make sense from a narrative standpoint), we decided to make the styles mutually exclusive. You can take multiple combat styles, but you can only use one at a time. That also makes the fighting styles feel like distinct disciplines that have their own methods and tenets. With that, the combat styles were ready to go into the book, and I hope that people will really embrace them as a way to open doors to new options for their martial characters.

Rich: These changes made these advanced feats much easier to use. Good job, Rodney!

Love is a Battlemat

BY SHELLY MAZZANOBLE
illustrations by William O'Conner

Love is in the air, everywhere I look around. You can't swing a diaper-clad, ageless, winged toddler without smacking into something pink, red, or scantily clad. (And for the record, you should never swing a toddler around. It's bad for their shoulders.)

One might think Valentine's Day is reserved for starry-eyed lovers. I say hooey. Valentine's Day should be celebrated regardless of your romantic status. There's got to be *something* to love, right? Red velvet cupcakes? *Gossip Girl*? Microfiber Snuggies? (Don't knock it until you've been encased in the loving arms of one. Not to mention, that a Snuggie can double as a mean wizard's robe.)

Even if you found yourself without a romantic relationship this Valentine's Day, there are plenty of relationships in your life to celebrate. Like the relationship you have with Dungeons & Dragons.

"Why thank you, Shelly. Sometimes words speak louder than actions. Saying "I love you" goes a long way."

Not to worry, Dungeons & Dragons. We're here for you.

"I have feelings too, you know!"

I know. Have I told you lately that I love you?

"Aww..."

Those who work on Dungeons & Dragons have an interesting bond with their favorite RPG. Not only do they love the game *socially*, but *professionally* as well. And that's not an easy balance.

In honor of the pinkest month on the calendar, I decided to examine what the game of love really means. Who better to ask than some of the most devoted duos in the office? Besides, I'm a sucker for a good "how they met" story.

Peter Schaefer, RPG Developer. With Dungeons & Dragons 18 Years.

As a young boy growing up in the lush green woods of Northern Oregon–

"I didn't grow up *in* the woods," Peter wants to clarify. "We had a house, you know."

Growing up in Hood River, the wind surfing capital of the world, a bespectacled, Birkenstock-clad Peter found himself immersed in cerebral hobbies like fantasy and sci-fi novels, computer games, and "playing in the woods."

"You do have an elfish look about you."

"Really? I've always thought of myself more as a halfling."

Perhaps the love of fantasy, gaming, and even tromping around in the wild might lead one to conclude that Peter and Dungeons & Dragons were meant to be.

"When you know, you know . . ."

"Yep. It was love at first read."

They met through a friend of a friend before Peter was even in double digits.

"My buddy described a game his older brother had and I was intrigued," Peter said, recounting what was to become a propitious conversation nearly two decades ago. Peter picked up a *Dungeons Master's Guide* and "away we went."

"He was just a kid and yet wise beyond his years."

Peter fondly remembers Rufus Redaxe, his beloved chaotic neutral dwarf fighter.

"Rufus was on a hereditary quest to make an axe from red steel," Peter reminisces. "He went on to establish an empire on the basis of being deeply in debt."

"Rufus! I haven't thought about him in years. How is the old chum doing, anyway?"

"Oh, he's long since retired. But I'm sure he remembers you fondly as well."

While Peter spends the most time with Dungeons & Dragons currently, he recalls a time in college when the two parted ways briefly.

"We grew apart," Peter explained. "Took different paths."

"If you love something, set it free . . ."

Peter's need to sow his wild oats introduced him to other games, such as *Mage*, *Exalted*, and *Shadowrun*.

"Being with other games only brought me closer to Dungeons & Dragons in the end," Peter explains.

"If it comes back to you, it's yours . . ."

"Aw, that's sweet."

Not everyone understood the bond between Peter and Dungeons & Dragons, but it's clear they have a lot of history together. In fact, it's that history that makes this game stand out from his other hobbies.

"We're very comfortable together."

"It's a very relaxed partnership."

Peter loves DMing as much as he loves rolling up a PC. It's Dungeons & Dragons' many layers of depth and storytelling that he finds endlessly fascinating.

"There's no other activity that incorporates telling a story with playing a game quite so well," Peter explained when asked what it is that makes the game so special.

"Peter is special too. He's smart and dedicated and loyal. And he has nice, brown eyes."

"I'm blushing!"

It's clear in this case absence does make the heart grow fonder, but what does the future have in store for these two?

"I see an enduring, but open, partnership," Peter said.

"Me too.... Wait. Open? How open?"

Rodney Thompson, RPG Developer. With Dungeons & Dragons 17 Years.

Picture this: a sweet southern boy—eight years old with a penchant for reading, baseball, and Nintendo games—hears wild tales of a mysterious game that involves halfling thieves, homemade flaming bullets, and skeletal monsters.

"A friend from my neighborhood played Dungeons & Dragons with his older cousins and told me all about it," Rodney said. "Just the idea of that kind of freedom blew my mind."

"He just had to meet me."

But it was another three years or so before Rodney and Dungeons & Dragons would finally come face to tabletop. The two hit it off right away, but not everyone approved.

"My parents were skeptical at first. Growing up in the South, there was some trepidation about the game," explained Rodney.

"I tend to clam up around parents."

"But once they realized you were good for me, they welcomed you with open arms."

"Sure. Once they learned I could provide for you,"

"They are very proud of my work."

Rodney fondly remembers his first time.

"Awkward!"

"First time rolling up a character."

"Oh."

"His name was Saluk—a human holy slayer in an Al-Qadim campaign."

"Al-Qadim? Wow, we haven't been there in a while."

Dungeons & Dragons players are a sentimental bunch. Some hold on to the d20 with which they rolled their first crit. Someone else once told me he had all the players he TPKed for the first time sign the DM screen from that fatal session. And Rodney still has the miniature of that first character that one of the other players painted for him.

"Unsurprisingly, in Chris Perkins's Wednesday night campaign, my avenger of the Raven Queen, Vargas, was heavily inspired by Saluk."

"The first one is always the most special. I'm glad Saluk didn't die a horrific death like the many that came after."

"Me too."

Like so many Dungeons & Dragons devotees, Rodney oscillates between player and DM

"That's the beauty of our relationship. No one needs to be stuck in just one role. Sometimes you feel like taking control of things and sometimes you want to sit back and let someone else take the reigns."

"I've had many great times in both roles. As a player, the last great time was in Chris Perkins's campaign," Rodney says.

"Ahh . . . Chris Perkins . . . one of the most thoughtful, loving, and creative Dungeon Masters I've ever known."

"Umm... I'm right here."

"Right. Sorry."

Rodney continues, "In a recent session my aforementioned avenger, Vargas, helped save the capital city of the Empire from destruction by destroying a giant floating fortress that was attacking the city."

"So brave."

"As a DM, about a month ago I ran an all-day game where my players laid siege to an enemy fortress, killed a white dragon, and then fought off githyanki warriors to capture a flying ship."

As much as Rodney cares for Dungeons & Dragons, he claims to be a "man of many loves" and insists there's room in his heart for lots of games. He likes board games, "especially cooperative or semi-cooperative games."

"In other words, he likes games that resemble me."

"I have a type, I guess."

For someone who is basically paid to notice other games, it seems like Dungeons & Dragons will always face some competition. But there's only one game he plays nearly as often as D&D.

"*Star Wars Saga Edition*."

"That's because you're afraid to commit. I don't want to pressure you but what's that expression about buying the cow...?"

Star Wars aside, hearing Rodney talk about what makes Dungeons & Dragons so special makes it hard to imagine him spending time with any other game.

"I love that when I go to Gen Con, I'm surrounded by people whose lives have been shaped by Dungeons & Dragons," he says. "The players have their own language, their own inside jokes and common stories, their own shared experiences. It's a very personal hobby, so people get very invested in it, and it really affects their culture."

"My friends are very important to me."

A self-proclaimed "free spirit," it's no surprise Rodney finds himself drawn to D&D's creativity and freedom.

"I love that every time I sit down to play, I'm making something; making a story, making a character, or just making a new memory."

"We do have some great memories."

"I like that as a DM I can create my own adventures, my own monsters, my own magic items, or my own world. I love the sense of ownership that D&D gives you over the game."

Rodney's friends love D&D too and that's important.

"You're not kidding. It's very hard to compete with hostile friends."

"Twice a week, I sit down with five to eight friends and play a game that is different every week," he said. "I also love the social aspect of the game."

"I like your friends too."

Rodney is running and playing more D&D than ever before and couldn't be happier. He says he and D&D are in a great place right now.

"Sure, there are always rough patches," he stated. "But I recently got to work on the upcoming D&D Essentials books as a designer, and I'm proud to be helping shape the future of the game."

"I feel safe with Rodney."

Great place or not, most relationships that have spanned over a decade have had to experience their share of growing pains.

"Who hasn't had a campaign fall apart in the past?" Rodney lamented. "Sometimes you just need to play something else to clear your head."

"I never needed time to 'clear my head,' but that's just me I guess."

No question Rodney is clear headed when talking about his future with D&D.

I'll certainly never stop playing D&D, barring a major catastrophe, and I'd like to keep doing what I do for a living for a long time to come. But I have to admit, Gamma World has been making eyes at me."

"I hope you don't think you're special! Gamma World has been making eyes at everyone!"

Bart Carroll, Editor-in-Chief, Dungeonsand-Dragons.com. With Dungeons & Dragons 27 Years

How do you keep things fresh after nearly three decades? It's easy, according to Bart.

"Dungeons & Dragons and I are very healthy," Bart answers without hesitation in regards to the current state of their relationship. "I play weekly at work, outside of work, and recently started an additional game on odd-weekends, as a means to reconnect with some friends, draw others in, and have one-off sessions that allow a fair degree of experimentation . . . "

"Whoa! Don't give them the wrong idea! You mean it's a chance for others to try out characters they normally wouldn't play and give new DMs some practice. Overall, it's a chance for us to just kick back and see where life takes us."

"Right. That's what I said."

"Whatever."

Being an "army brat," Bart spent much of his childhood trying to fit into one group or another. With every new city came a new group of friends and exposure to new hobbies. This is probably the catalyst for Bart's love of discovering new games, whether at a hobby store or from a friend's bookshelf. But there is something about Dungeons & Dragons that stands the test of time.

"We have to work at it, you know. But it's worth it."

"Dungeons & Dragons encapsulates all those things I loved as a kid and lets me experience them every time I play."

"You're so sentimental. It's cute."

After hearing the older kids describe Dungeons & Dragons, Bart went on his first adventure to find out more about this elusive, mysterious game that combined several of his passions—knights, monsters, and mythology.

"They had me at dinosaurs."

"Sure, I gave you dinosaurs. Relationships are all about making concessions."

"I remember spending my allowance on books and adventures at Toys R Us," Bart recounts. "And Christmas of 1983 I saw a red boxed set under my tree. With dice! I could not have been happier."

The happiness continued through several years and almost as many characters.

"I tend to gravitate toward characters that aren't afraid to take silly risks for the sake of making something happen," Bart explains.

"I might be inclined to say it's less 'risky' and more 'careless.'"

"Maybe. One character came *this close* to laying his hands on the hand of Eye of Vecna before his own party knocked him unconscious and foolishly had the useful item destroyed."

"It's times like that I wonder if you're really committed you know? Like are you living for the moment with me or wondering what the next great adventurer you'll roll up will be like."

"When we're together, I only have eyes for you."

"That's sweet."

Bart gets a little starry eyed when reminiscing about one of those careless, slapdash, risk-taking characters.

"I teleported inside a force field and found a chain golem that I tried to commandeer. That didn't work—the golem activated and tried to kill me—but I escaped and managed to teleport an enemy inside the same force field . . . where the golem then smashed him to pieces!"

"And there was that whole 'I'm a cleric! Nope! I lied! I'm an assassin!' fiasco."

"We're still talking about that?"

"I'm sorry but when three out of four party members are knocked prone and your assassin is scampering down the hallway looking for a mute old man with a bevy of canaries, it's hard to not think about it."

"They were fine! Marty made his death save and managed to throw a healing word on Kierin.

"For the record, I did not agree with that decision. Your fellow party-members were right to be upset."

"Party *member*," Bart corrects. "I believe there was just one who got severely bent out of shape."

"I think she was right. But whatever. Let's move on."

"Fine."

"Fine."

A lover of all things geek and a wide-array of games (*Munchkin*, *Battlestar Galactica*, and **Magic: The Gathering** to name a few), Bart is a giant flirt when it comes to other pastimes, but none have given him butterflies like Dungeons & Dragons does.

"Still, they try."

"I dallied with Palladium's *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* RPG for a while," Bart recalls. "I introduced some kids at school to it who had played Dungeons & Dragons when younger. But when they sat around the table, they really just wanted to play Dungeons & Dragons again, not something Dungeons & Dragons-like. So we switched systems, and started playing regularly again."

"If I were one to say, 'I told you so' I'd say, 'I told you so.'"

Part of the strength of their relationship can be credited to Dungeons & Dragons' confidence.

"That's because Bart is very generous with the compliments. Not a day goes by that he doesn't remind me of how appreciated I am."

"You're appreciated! Not sure if I said it yet today."

With Dungeons & Dragons, "Every time is a good time. Maybe because the game *still* reminds me of how much fun I had playing with different groups at different times in my life," Bart says.

"Now I'm blushing."

As for their future? Bart and D&D don't show any signs of slowing down. In fact, quite the contrary. Bart believes in a sort of paying it forward—at least in terms of sharing his love of D&D with generations to come.

"I see . . . my currently fictitious kids sitting around the table being prodded, tricked, or otherwise coerced into playing with dad, who's keen to teach

them math, vocabulary, and cooperative lessons in the disguise of a gloriously geeky game."

"I love kids. Bring it on!"

Chris Youngs, Editor-in-Chief, D&D Insider. With Dungeons & Dragons 13 Years (on and off).

Ah, young love. So full of promise. Budding with excitement. Nothing but hope for the future. Until your mother makes you stop seeing each other. That's what happened shortly after five-year old Chris first met Dungeons & Dragons. Yes, *five*. He was introduced by his older brother who, upon learning the game wasn't a solo experience, was forced to recruit his "malleable little brother."

"That's how I meet a lot of little brothers."

But their love was left unfulfilled as mom fell victim to the hype surrounding Dungeons & Dragons' alleged bad reputation.

"She was told the game had *real* spells in it," Chris said.

"It's hard to reason with overprotective moms of the 80s."

"And demon summoning information."

"Umm . . . no. Not my cup of mead."

Although Chris's relationship with D&D was called to a halt early on, Chris's penchant for gaming wasn't. During their forced separation, he spent time with mom-approved games such as *Monopoly*, *Sorry*, and *Mille Bornes* before entering what he affectionately refers to as his FASA period.

"I dallied with *Shadowrun*, *Earthdawn*, and *Battle Tech*," he recounted. "I probably designed more Battle Mechs than I ever have Dungeons & Dragons characters. And that's saying something"

"That's because you were in junior high when time was an endless commodity. Try to do that now."

But everyone knows destiny wins in the end. It was 1998 when Chris and Dungeons & Dragons crossed paths again. Perhaps they were jaded from their false start several years before, but Chris admits the sparks didn't fly immediately.

"I was weary. Once bitten, twice shy."

"It took a couple of years to get back into the groove, but then 3rd Edition came along, and it was just like old times."

"Old times? He was five! But yes, we moved very quickly."

Since then the good times have kept on rolling. Even his mom has come to terms with Chris's relationship with Dungeons & Dragons.

"She just wants me to be happy," he said. "And she doesn't think the game is evil anymore. That was, um, an important step."

"I had to work at that one. To know me is to love me."

"Love might be too strong a word."

"There's still time."

So what's the attraction? Part of it is what many find attractive about a game like Dungeons & Dragons—the only boundaries are your imagination. "If you can think it, you can make it part of the game," Chris says.

"I'm not a pushover or anything. I just want people to have fun."

Dungeons & Dragons has introduced Chris to some of the most beloved characters in his life.

"My favorite is always whichever character I'm playing at the moment, even if it's a one-off."

"You throw you whole heart into every character you roll up. It's very refreshing."

"Thank you."

Currently Chris plays an egotistic sorcerer with a penchant for wild parties and wilder magic.

"It's a blast," he admits.

"No pun intended?"

Make no mistake, Chris is definitely a player, and while he insists you can't help but at least *notice* an interesting product shot or be intrigued by a glowing review of a new game, he spends the majority of his free time with Dungeons & Dragons.

"There's not a single game I currently play as much as Dungeons & Dragons," Chris proclaimed.

"Oh yeah? What about Rock Band*?"*

"Except maybe *Rock Band*."

"That's okay. It just makes the time we do spend together all the more special."

The future looks bright for these two with Chris's only complaint being he wishes he had more time for Dungeons & Dragons.

"I see many more adventures. Many more monsters. Many more dungeons. And loads of phat lewtz!"

So there you have it. It's a good thing I'm not the jealous type because that's a lot of love.

Unlike other relationships, hearing people profess their devotion for your beloved only serves to ignite the flames.

But I hope you weren't looking for a monogamous relationship with Dungeons & Dragons.

"No one loves a player as much as I do."

About the Author

Although her mother warned her about games like this, **Shelly Mazzanoble** and Dungeons & Dragons have been blissfully enjoying each other's company for six years.

D&D Experience and a New Play Experience

D&D Play Spotlight

BY CHRIS TULACH

At our feature convention D&D Experience, we announced a new in-store weekly D&D play experience called D&D Encounters, which begins its first season by exploring the iconic dungeon of Undermountain on March 17. I'll give you the complete details below, but first, I want to give a little wrap-up of D&D Experience.

Serious Fun in Fort Wayne!

D&D Experience was a blast this year. Hundreds and hundreds of D&D gamers from around the US, Canada, and Europe braved the cold and headed to Fort Wayne, Indiana for a four-day celebration of all things D&D. In a big ballroom in the Grand Wayne Convention Center, players got their fill of Living Forgotten Realms, an awesome Dark Sun preview adventure, and bashed monsters in a new version of the Convention Delve.

The hall swells with tables of dedicated D&D gamers.

What really brought the players out in force were the two special gaming events at the show—the Dark Sun preview adventure and the Living Forgotten Realms battle interactive. At the Dark Sun preview called "Death in the Arena," players got their first look at the 4th Edition world of Athas, playing a variety of diverse characters such as a mul barbarian gladiator and a thri-kreen shaman elemental priest. I won't spoil the adventure details for you, because we'll be running it again at PAX East and other local shows in the future!

The Living Forgotten Realms battle interactive was the first of its kind for LFR, and it was a rousing success! Dozens of tables participated in two days' worth of missions as they attempted to save Elturel from the horrors of the nearby plaguelands. As the spellplague spread to the city, the characters rallied to its defense and only narrowly managed to avoid complete catastrophe! For more information on the battle interactive and to hear players' stories, head to the Living Forgotten Realms Community Page.

My table gets ready to take on the savage land of Athas!

Who knows, a convention near you might be running it soon!

We also had other special events, including a pair of book signings. The signing with Rich Baker on Saturday had an additional surprise—free copies of Rich's not-yet-released *Avenger*, the third and final book in the Blades of the Moonsea trilogy! Suffice to say, he had quite a line of fans.

We also had lots of sneak peeks at the show, giving out first looks at the *D&D Essentials* line, a deep dive into the design of the updated Dark Sun setting, and lots of information on our upcoming board games

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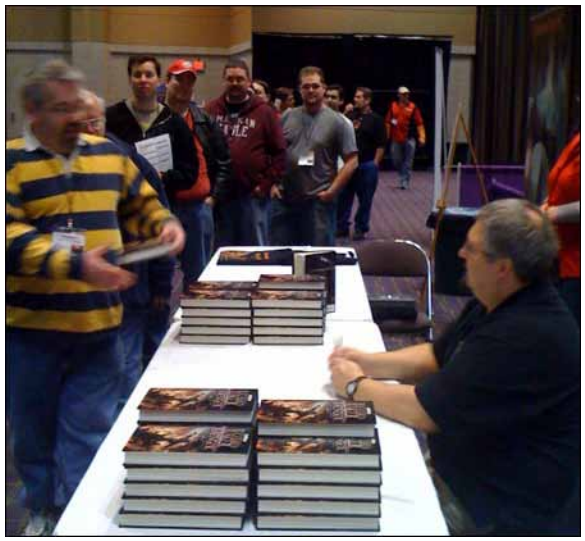

Rich Baker gives away his signature and his new book, Avenger.

and the new Gamma World game. Some lucky folks even got to playtest Gamma World with Rich Baker!

All in all, we had a great show—attendance was way up, and all sorts of little secrets were dropped on players throughout the weekend. If you didn't make it to the show this year, make sure you make plans to attend next year. In the meantime, you can listen to podcasts of many of the seminars right now!

Mike Mearls presents the 2010 D&D lineup at the product preview seminar.

D&D Encounters: Undermountain Starts March 17!

We launch the first-ever weekly Wednesday D&D play experience in just a few short weeks. I'd like to take some space here in the column to tell you more about the program so you can get organized now and be ready to participate on March 17!

Weekly in-store D&D play on Wednesdays. D&D Encounters runs each week in your local Wizards Play Network store. This is the first D&D program that Wizards has designed specifically for weekly play. Because it's on Wednesday nights, it stays away from busy weekends and coincides nicely with comic book day.

An ongoing mini-campaign. D&D Encounters is set up with an ongoing narrative element, played as a mini-campaign lasting a few months. Each mini-campaign is also known as a season of play. After one season finishes, the next one begins the very next week, without interruption. The season is divided into three chapters; each chapter is composed of a few sessions of play.

One encounter per week. Fitting D&D Encounters into a busy schedule is made much easier with its one-encounter-per-week sessions. You can get the encounter done within 1-2 hours, making it easy to finish at a reasonable hour and keeping the DM's prep time to a minimum each week.

Earn Renown Points for accomplishments. At the conclusion of each session, you earn Renown Points for different types of in-game accomplishments–defeating encounters, hitting milestones, doing something spectacular during a game session, etc. As you accumulate those points, you earn rewards cards that can be used in-game for your current and future D&D Encounters characters. Some rewards are easy to get and can be obtained after only a few sessions of play; others might take a while to qualify for. The first is the Delver reward, and it's given to you on the session you've earned it. The other two rewards (Explorer and Adventurer) are awarded at the end of the season based on those that qualify for them by earning a certain higher total of points.

DMs get rewards too! In addition to the player rewards in the D&D Encounters kit, there are also special rewards for the DMs, consisting of valuable game aids and other cool specially-made, not-available-for-sale items. Each new season will bring a different DM reward in the kit.

Each season takes you to new D&D worlds. Every D&D Encounters season is a self-contained mini-campaign, giving you an ongoing story in a different D&D setting each time. Each season will last three to four months—short enough that you don't need to make a long-term campaign commitment but long enough to give you a sense of growth and accomplishment. The seasonal nature of D&D Encounters also means you'll be able to sample new game content and different worlds a few times every year. The first season of D&D Encounters is set in the Forgotten Realms, where you'll be uncovering the secrets of *Halaster's Lost Apprentice* in one of the most infamous dungeons of all, Undermountain! In season two,

journey to the blasted lands of Athas as you play in a mini-campaign preview of the Dark Sun campaign setting!

Get social by following us and sharing. The D&D Encounters play experience goes beyond the store as Wizards uses social networking tools like Twitter and Facebook to communicate messages each week, sometimes offering special in-game benefits or events that affect your current play session. In addition, you can share your stories, post photos, and join the discussion right here at the D&D Community Group.

D&D Encounters: Undermountain

Halaster's Lost Apprentice: A lost passageway on the upper level of the most infamous dungeon in Faerûn has recently been uncovered. When a patron hires a band of adventurers to brave the dangers of Undermountain, a search is on to uncover secrets of an apprentice of the dungeon's lost creator—Halaster. Bring a 1st-level character or use a pre-generated character. Characters this season can be exported to the Living Forgotten Realms campaign at the conclusion of the mini-campaign!

Season Length: 12 sessions (3 chapters of 4 sessions each)

Season Dates: March 17 – June 2 (Wednesdays)

Make sure your local store signs up for D&D Encounters through the Wizards Play Network. Signups begin on February 8th. They'll want to sign up early, because kit quantities are limited!

That's all this month on the D&D Play Spotlight. Join me again next month as we talk about PAX East and share more information on D&D Encounters and *Player's Handbook* 3 Game Day!

About the Author

Originally thought to have been raised from a humble Midwestern family, Chris Tulach actually fell to Earth in a meteorite-shaped capsule flung from a planet far outside our galaxy. While under the yellow rays of Sol, Chris's nerdity far surpasses that of any normal human. Using this precious gift only for good, he has become the D&D Organized Play Content Developer, responsible for the development and deployment of Dungeons & Dragons organized play programs. He is also the co-author of *E2 Kingdom of the Ghouls*.

Coming This Fall ...

BY BILL SLAVICSEK

Hot on the heels of some amazing announcements we made at Dungeons & Dragons Experience, I want to give all of the Insiders the complete scoop on a bunch of new products that we're really excited about. First, let me give you a tour of our new Dungeons & Dragons *Essentials* line of products. Then I want to show off our new take on Gamma World and address questions you may have about our new line of board games. Let's get to it!

Dungeons & Dragons Essentials

While the current format of the Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game is great for those of us who have been playing the game for years (or even decades!), we knew that we needed to take a shot at making the products more accessible to the next generation of gamers. For this reason, we're introducing the *Essentials* line of products later this year.

The *Essentials* line consists of 10 key products that will always be in stock and will form the core of the Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game experience moving forward. Each product is designed to provide a more streamlined, more directed, and less expensive experience for the user. These products don't replace the existing *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, or *Monster Manual*. They represent a separate pathway into the game.

It all starts with the Dungeons & Dragons *Fantasy Roleplaying Game*, a new version of the original "Red Box" starter game. This is the Essential starting point for new players coming to the brand. It features a player's book that uses a solitaire pick-a-path process to create a character, a Dungeon Master's book with basic 4th Edition game rules and a group adventure, a set of dice, a poster map, cardstock tokens for characters and monsters, and power cards. The box takes players from 1st level through 2nd level with a limited selection of options and choices.

From there, the Dungeons & Dragons *Rules Compendium* puts all the core rules of the game into a single volume for the first time. The rules are presented in a logical order, organized for easy access during a game session. The 6" x 9" trade paperback is full color and costs $19.95, making it a must-have for players and Dungeon Masters who want to go beyond the basic rules presented in the "Red Box." Its size helps with portability, and it takes up less room on your game table.

Next, the line divides the rest of the products based on the role you've taken in the game—player or Dungeon Master.

For players, two 6" x 9" $19.95 trade paperbacks present the essential classes and races, covering all tiers of play, from heroic through epic. Each one includes a selection of classes and races that can immediately fill out an adventuring party, as well as character creation and advancement rules, skills, feats, equipment, and the rules of the game as they pertain to players.

Heroes of the Fallen Lands covers the classes and races associated most closely with the traditional Dungeons

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& Dragons game. It features two new fighter builds, a new rogue build, a new cleric build, a new wizard build, and a new ranger build. The races in this one include humans, dwarves, eladrin, elves, and halflings. *Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms* features more options, including a new cleric build, a new rogue build, a new paladin build, a new ranger build, a new druid build, and a new warlock build. The races in this one include dragonborn, drow, half-elves, and tieflings.

For Dungeon Masters, the boxed *Dungeon Master's Kit* expands the DMing material presented in the "Red Box," as well as two adventures, two poster maps, a DM's screen, and monster tokens to help a DM take a campaign from 1st to 30th level.

The *Monster Vault* boxed set includes a book of essential Dungeons & Dragons monsters, tokens for every monster in the box, an adventure, and a poster map. The adventures that appear in the "Red Box," the *Dungeon Master's Kit*, and the *Monster Vault* can be run sequentially to create the beginnings of a campaign.

Three sets of *Dungeon Tiles Master Sets* round out the essential offerings for the DM. These include *The Dungeon*, *The City*, and *The Wilderness*. Each set comes in a box and contains 10 sheets of dungeon tiles—and the box itself features a grid, allowing it to be used as an elevated play surface. Some of the tiles in these sets are pulled from older, out-of-print *Dungeon Tiles* sets, but each box contains a number of new tiles as well. These Master Sets are intended to provide Dungeon Masters with a basic set of tiles for building dungeon, city, and wilderness encounters—and boxes in which to store them! Future sets of *Dungeon Tiles* will expand these Master Sets by providing tiles that are more specific and strongly themed.

What's the tenth *Essentials* product? A set of Dungeons & Dragons dice for anyone who needs an extra set completes the *Essentials* offerings. These 10 products won't be added to or taken away from. They're designed to be the starting point and baseline for all Dungeons & Dragons games moving forward.

Here's a simple list of how these products fit together.

For Everyone

Dungeons & Dragons *Fantasy Roleplaying Game Starter Set* (Red Box)—September 2010

Dungeons & Dragons *Rules Compendium*—September 2010

Dungeons & Dragons *Roleplaying Game Dice Set*—August 2010

For Players

Heroes of the Fallen Lands—September 2010

Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms—November 2010

For Dungeon Masters

Dungeon Master's Kit—October 2010

Monster Vault—November 2010

Dungeon Tiles Master Set: The Dungeon—July 2010

Dungeon Tiles Master Set: The City—October 2010

Dungeon Tiles Master Set: The Wilderness—December 2010

Yes, our focus for the end of 2010 is on setting up the *Essentials* line. But right after that, our new frontlist plan begins to roll out, providing expanded game options and materials for all players. I'll talk a bit more about how that's going to work next month.

Dungeon Master to the Stars

I hinted recently that Chris Perkins, the Creative Manager for Dungeons & Dragons and our increasingly popular Dungeon Master to the stars, had gone on a secret mission to run a game for some VFPs (Very Funny People). Now I can reveal that he ran an incredible game of Dungeons & Dragons for the folks at Robot Chicken. Check out this link to see their excursion into Undermountain.

Dungeons & Dragons Encounters

We also debuted our new weekly adventure series for play in Wizards Play Network retail locations at Dungeons & Dragons Experience last week. Starting now, you can visit your local game store every Wednesday to play an exciting new adventure. The first mini-campaign takes place in the Forgotten Realms, specifically in the depths of Undermountain. You'll find additional information here.

D&D Gamma World

We unveiled the new D&D Gamma World products last week as well. Coming in October, the D&D Gamma World *Roleplaying Game* provides a complete experience in a box. Using the Dungeons & Dragons rules as the basis, the game is designed to be most people's second game, the game they go to when they want to break out of the usual fantasy mold. That said, it's also designed to appeal to players who enjoy science fiction with a bit of a wacky element. And I do mean wacky! Thanks to streamlined

and random character generation and a set of Alpha Mutations and Omega Tech cards, the game plays fast and loose, with plenty of opportunities for surprises, excitement, and humor as your mutant rat swarm discovers an ancient artifact known as a Teddy Bear or your insectoid bear mutant tries to figure out how to use a deadly toast-r-oven against the approaching killer robot horde. The boxed set comes with plenty of cards, but for players and Gamemasters who want to expand their options and add to the wackiness, a random booster set will be available for just that purpose.

To dispel some of the rumors that followed the announcement at Dungeons & Dragons Experience, let me state this clearly: D&D Gamma World is a roleplaying game. The cards add a random element that is built into the game play, but it is in no way a collectible trading card game. It uses dice and all of the basic Dungeons & Dragons RPG rules, with the added element of random cards to reflect the random mutations and technological discoveries that have always been a part of the Gamma World mythology. We're having a blast in our playtests, and I think you'll enjoy it as well when it debuts in October.

The first expansion product, *Famine at Far-Go*, comes out in December. It includes more mutants and more adventure for those who didn't get enough of the mutants and madness in the core set. We'll talk more about D&D Gamma World and other possible genre products in the months ahead. Maybe we'll even run a poll as to what kinds of genres you'd like us to focus on in the future.

Dungeons & Dragons Board Games

Finally, a few words about our upcoming line of board games. Our board games are not replacements for our miniatures line. We have a nice slate of miniatures products coming out this year, including the *Lords of Madness* Huge Set and the Limited Edition Orcus Gargantuan figure. Our board games are just that: board games! A different play experience using specific elements of the Dungeons & Dragons brand. We kicked this off with the release of D&D *Heroscape*, and we're following it up with *Castle Ravenloft* and *Dragonfire Mountain*. The latter two board games use our new Adventure System Cooperative Play mechanics, which means that the components in the two boxes can be used together to create completely new experiences. Anyway, they're board games, not roleplaying games or RPG accessories. They're meant to stand on their own and provide a lighter, faster experience for when you don't want to play a full-on RPG session or for Dungeons & Dragons fans who enjoy a more structured experience. And they're fun!

Well, that's it for this month. Until next time,
Keep Playing!

Bill

In Case You Don't Know Him

Bill Slavicsek's gaming life was forever changed when he discovered Dungeons & Dragons in 1976. He became a gaming professional in 1986 when he was hired by West End Games as an editor. He quickly added developer, designer, and creative manager to his resume, and his work helped shape the *Paranoia*, *Ghostbusters*, *Star Wars*, and *Torg* roleplaying games. He even found some time during that period to do freelance work for Dungeons & Dragons 1st Edition. In 1993, Bill joined the staff of TSR, Inc. as a designer/editor. He worked on a bunch of 2nd Edition material, including products for Core Dungeons & Dragons, *Dark Sun*, *Ravenloft*, and *Planescape*. In 1997, he was part of the TSR crowd that moved to Seattle to join Wizards of the Coast, and in that year he was promoted to R&D Director for Dungeons & Dragons. In that position, Bill oversaw the creation of both the 3rd Edition and 4th Edition of the Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game. He was one of the driving forces behind the Dungeons & Dragons Insider project, and he continues to oversee and lead the creative strategy and effort for Dungeons & Dragons.

Bill's enormous list of credits includes Alternity, *d20 Modern*, *d20 Star Wars*, *Pokemon Jr.*, *Eberron Campaign Setting*, the *Dungeons & Dragons For Dummies* books, and his monthly Ampersand (&) column for *Dragon* magazine.